

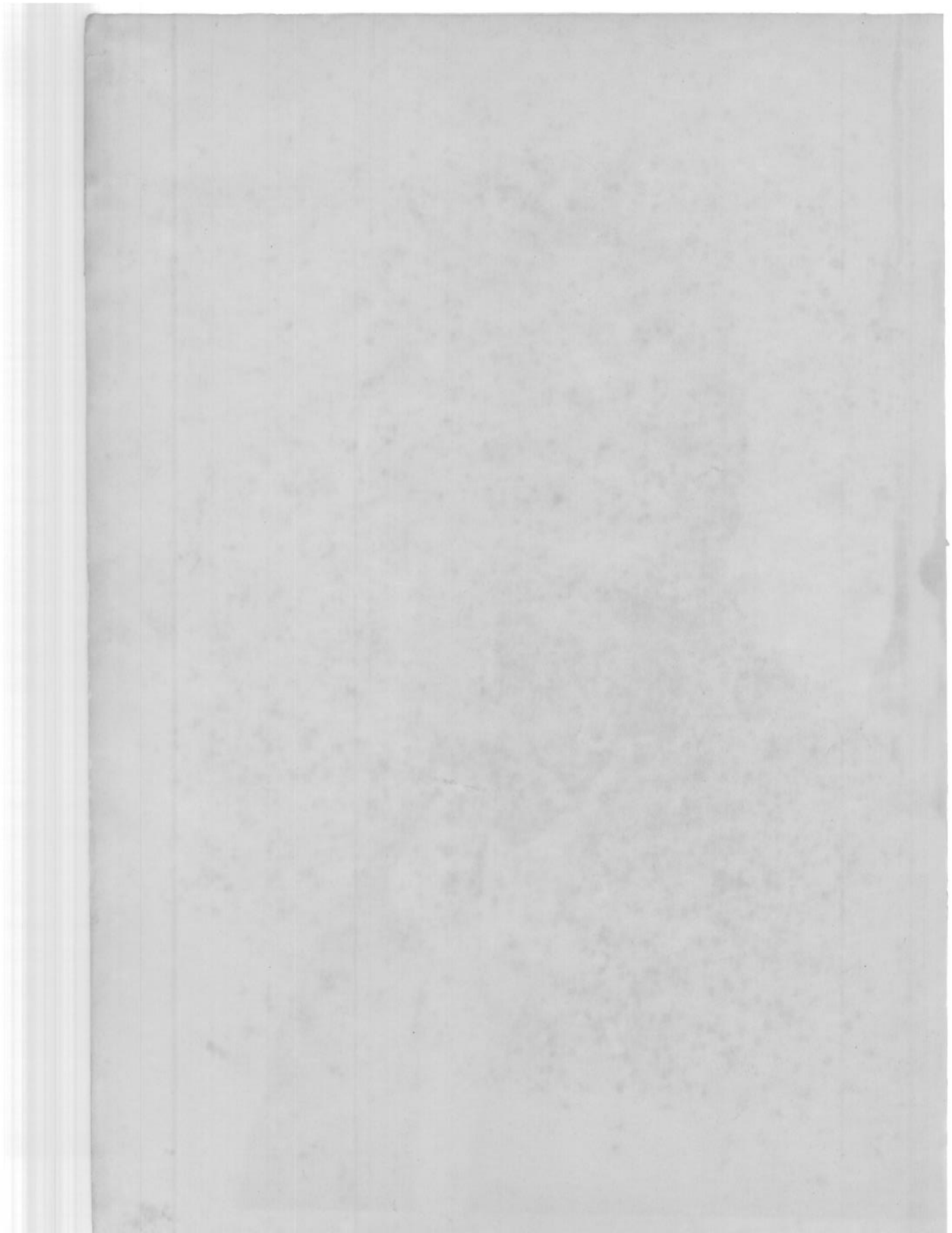
November 95

Rs 5-00

Phoenix

JOURNAL ON MUSIC & DANCE







PHOENIX

Journal on Music and Dance

Vol 1 November 1995 No 1

Contents

S.N.Chandrasehkar

© 6675758

Bangalore K Venkataram

© 6630079

Dr M. Surya Prasad

© 2253975

Editors

B.Rajashekar

© 2216459

Advertising Manager

B.Shashikala

Circulation Manager

Contributions from readers on music and dance are welcome. They should be neatly typed in English on one side of the paper double spaced.

Adequate return postage should be enclosed for the return of unaccepted articles.

No remuneration is payable at present. But when adequate circulation is built up, contributions will be adequately compensated.

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00

Three Years: Rs 140-00

Please send all remittances to PHOENIX

The Circulation Manager

138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009 © 2263696

RN 45468/87

Cover Photo:

R.K. Srikantan

by N.Sundarraj

Messages 4

Editorial 5

Calling AIR 6

Quiz 7

RRK The Indefatigable Sadhaka 8

Mysore Dancer Makes a Mark 9

R.K.Srikantan Joins the Galaxy 10

Udupi Hosts Memorable Venu Utsav 12

Quiz Solutions 13

The Unity in Carnatic Music 14

Cassette Causerie 16

Young Talents 18

Messages

I
It is but fitting that my esteemed friends S.N.Chandrashekar and M. Suryaprasad who are deeply interested in the performing arts like music, dance and drama are embarking upon the publication of a new magazine devoted to fine arts to be named as Phoenix which will be unique in its contents and presentation. It is a fact that there is a paucity of such informative good magazines particularly devoted to the advancement of music and dance. Art students and rasikas are in need of more knowledge both critical and analytical of our performing arts which would certainly help them, especially youth to understand the intricacies of the fine arts and thereby appreciate better our priceless heritage in all its grandeur.

Consequently the number of knowledgeable rasikas will be increased for the promotion of these arts. I firmly hope that this magazine will have a vital role in art education and I congratulate my enthusiastic friends on their venture. I wish the magazine all speedy progress and total success.

R.K.Srikantan, Bangalore

II

I know that a magazine devoted to the cause of music and dance is being brought out. There are a few newsletters, monthly and quarterly, published by some music organisations mainly to focus their programmes.

But there is room and need for a high quality magazine exclusively dedicated to the promotion of music and dance conveying authentic knowledge in this vast field, narrating accounts of the lives and contributions

of the great vidwans, rendering informed criticism and assessment of the activities in the field, including books, treatises and cassettes etc to mention only some items.

Knowing as I do, the deep interest in the cause of persons involved in this venture and their rich knowledge and experience, I am confident that the periodical will make a significant contribution to the cause and I do hope that it will received solid support from the interested public and the concerned authorities.

I wish the venture all success.

*Justice Nittoor Sreenivasa Rau
President, Percussive Arts
Centre(Regd), Bangalore*

III

I am much delighted to note that under your visionary editorship an English journal for music and dance is being published. Thus you are not only filling up a big void but also contributing to the healthier development of the classical music and dance field and artistes.

I wish all the best to the very ambitious magazine, "Phoenix".

*Pandit Seshadri Gawai
Principal, Sri Aravinda Sangeetha
Vidyala,,Editor, Gayana Ganga*

IV

I am delighted to hear that you and S.N.Chandra Sekhar are planning to start a magazine which is to be devoted solely to music and dance and oppex arts in Karnataka (in English) with the worthwhile objective of projecting our arts and artistes beyond Karnataka. I wish you all success in your venture, both in my personal capacity, as a dancer and as the President of the Karnataka Nritya Kala

Parishath. I have always felt that the arts and artistes of Karnataka need a wider media coverage inside and outside the country for in my opinion we have some very great artistes, both young and old in our State.

*Leela Ramanathan
President, Karnataka Nritya Kala
Parishath, Bangalore.*

V

It gives me great pleasure to know that a new profusely illustrated monthly magazine in English, 'Phoenix', will be launched. It is a pity that great artists of Karnataka in the fields of music and dance are little known outside Karnataka as most of the magazines are in Kannada and hence restricted to only our State.

Phoenix will bring our artists and heritage of Karnataka into focus and limelight thus expanding the spheres of Indian art and artists into a larger world of appreciation and recognition. I wish this interesting magazine great success and I congratulate S.N.C and M.S.P for undertaking such a laudable enterprise.

*U.K. Chandrabhaga Devi
President, Karnataka Sangeetha
Nrithya Academy, Bangalore*

VI

I am more than happy to hear that the greatly felt need of popularising Karnataka's performing arts outside the state and the country is being considered by our veteran art critics, S.N. Chandrasekar and M.Surya Prasad who are launching an art journal in English titled, 'Phoenix', aimed at propagating the artistes of Karnataka.

I join the artistes of Karnataka in congratulating our friends as their venture and wishing the journal all success.

*Maya Rao
Natya Institute of Kathak and
Choreography*

Editorial



Fulfilling the Need

A periodical dedicated to the performing arts is no new idea. At any rate PHOENIX is not the first in the line. There have been quite a few predecessors, some surviving and some others folded up for extraneous reasons. A majority of them, including those which have stood the test of time, have been in Kannada and understandably so.

It is here that PHOENIX makes a departure. Perhaps it will be the first in the State to come out in English. That doesn't in anyway mean that the promoters of this venture are less proud of their State language. Nor does it betray any slavish mentality towards English, as it is generally made out to be. In fact, all four of them are born and bred on this soil, none being less proficient in that language too!

Hence an explanation for an English journal. However much a journal in Kannada serves the twin arts of dance and music, its appeal can't cut across the borders of our State. Under the circumstances there are few avenues through which even our own immediate neighbors can come to know about the state of the art on this side of the border. This can be done only by an English journal. And hence its justification.

In a world which dazzles in publicity, a medium of this kind thus is an imperative need. Phoenix is a sincere attempt to fulfil that need, nay a desideratum. As a journal it will not only be a chronicle of artistic events in the State, but will keep a tab on artists espousing the twin arts. Hence it would be an ideal forum for the release of publicity material relating to activities of music and dance, including 'arangetrams'. Of special interest should be the column on radio music, a genre which has been neglected by the print media of long.

The promoters earnestly hope that all those engaged in the twin use the columns of this new journal to our mutual benefit.

S.N.Chandrasekhar.

Calling AIR

The advent of the Radio is one of the best things that could have happened to connoisseurs in general and musicians in particular. Besides the featuring of top-notchers regularly, there is ample scope for the listener to hear artistes not commonly available otherwise. There is as much incentive for young artistes.

The radio, on its part, has devised a near perfected system of assessing the quality of each performer. The grading is done by panels of experts both for the frequency and duration of the programme assigned to each. But it can't be as readily conceded that there is strict adherence to standards, judging by the quality one has to contend with. Sub-standard stuff is by no means a rarity.

This column is an attempt to keep tab on as many broadcast programmes in the preceding month. The stress is on artistes from the State though reference to those emanating from other stations is not ruled out. It is hoped the artiste community, the authorities as also the listening cognescenti will take the asides in the right spirit and help PHOENIX to serve a worthy cause and thereby the AIR to serve the listening public better:

The impressive feature on "Srikrishna" (morning of August 17) should be the most auspicious curtain riser for this column. It was designed by 'Shathavadhani' R.Ganesh, who has made a name in spontaneously meeting the needs of many an aspiring choreographer to devise dance features and dance-dramas. The illustration through music was entrusted to the tested vocal of T.S.Satyavati. The selection of verses on Krishna was as purposeful as it was judicious,



Padma Gurudutt

a tribute to the genius of Ganesh. Their rendition, enconced in choice ragas was as effective, impactful.

Shahana (Ikanannu), Ritigoula (Jananinnu) and Saveri were the ragas Satyavati chose for her regular programme (9:15 a.m., Sept.1). There can't be two opinions about Satya's voice, talent and manner of singing. With equal stress on 'matu' and 'dhatu', what she sings verily surges out of her very being. It is difficult to imagine how she has not gone up the ladder.



Tara Mohan

Earlier, Padma Gurudutt (8:30 a.m on August 8) had captured the listeners' attention with a wholesome Bilahari (Gopalam Seveham). The effusion of well knit 'sancharas' lent a convincing imagery of the melody.

Later in the day Tara Mohan's Keeravani revived memories of a bygone era. It was pleasant, absorbing listening.

Another vainika who has a reputation for consistency is Sudha Vadiraj (9:30 am, August 18). But her rendition of the celebrated Swarajati in Bhairavi was not fully evocative. Her Kalyana-Vasantha number put her back on the rails. The 'nyasa' and the phraseology were impressive.

"Dinamani Vamsha", the soulful Harikambodi composition of Thyagaiah gave K.V.Shantaratanam (morning of August 19) a sound beginning. The kriti, especially was full of feeling. Pantuvarali (Aparama Bhakti) was more impressive for all its subtleties of 'niraval' and "swara" passages. It all made one wonder how she is not heard much on the concert stage.

When one listens to veteran R.R.Keshavamurthy on the violin (8:30 a.m., August 20), it is impossible to believe that he is past his prime. Kedaragoula and Hindola were the two ragas that came for sustained treatment. The very applicability of the nuances peculiar to the ragas served as an example of a complete artiste that he is. Indeed, here is a case where one unhesitatingly would use the appellation "Vidwan".

In the prestigious South-Zone hookup on the same night, M.K. Pranesh (flute, student of M.R. Doreswamy) easily carried the day. Though he seemed a little hesitant as he began with "lambodara" (Kambodi), he warmed up with Pantuvarali (Raghuvara). It acquired a special delight at the improvisational flashes.



Vinayak Torvi

Suma Sudhindra's veena recital (9:30 a.m. on August 22) fell short of expectation. The Nayaki number (was it Palayamam?) was run through with an easy gait. But Purvikalyani (Meenakshim) was not in good shape. She appeared certainly out of sorts, not in shape.

As usual, R.K.Srikantan's concert on the same night was a proportioned presentation of choice melodies. "Sri Narada" (Kanada) showed a mastery one associates with an artiste of his generation. His Kedara-goula (Tulasibilva) flashed in its balanced alapana, the infrequently-heard Thyagaraja kriti glorying in its measured development of 'niraval' and 'swara' passages.

But the voice of the seasoned C.K.Tara (9:30 a.m. August 24) was seemingly not in mettle. Her Amritavarshini gave glimpses of her past records. But neither the alap for Kharaharapriya nor the fine Vasudevachar kriti "Ra Ra Rajeeva" could stand a test.

Nor was there much to write home about N. Chokkamma's veena (8:30 a.m. August 25). Her Behag (Smarajana) meandered rather aimlessly to show that her best is far behind her.

Popular R.K.Suryanarayana was featured in a veena concert (10:10 a.m. August 22). There was customary abandon when he began with a Varnam in Shankarabharana. But the piece was not convincing, nor Mukhari that

followed it. It was his Shanmukhapriya that revealed his brilliance, both in technique and raga bhava, the familiar kriti Marivere acquiring a delight as Suri drifted to a neat Thanam.

Kashi Vishalakshi (8:30 a.m. August 30) is no unfamiliar name either. Her Siddhivinayakam (Shanmukhapriya) appeared pedestrian. Her alapana for Khamas was more mature, the delineation standing out for its steady laya.

Vinayak Torvi in his night concert on August 31 gave a majestic portrayal of Jaijaiivanti. It was chiselled with fleeting 'taans', acquiring a fine balance between 'chalan' and 'laya'. Vinayak lived upto his reputation.

Obituary S.Prakash



S. Prakash, noted Mridangam artist died of heart attack on September 10, 95 at Bangalore, at his residence. He was 47.

Prakash had accompanied many leading artists of Karnataka.

PHOENIX conveys its condolences to his family.

Editor

??Quiz-1

by M. Surya Prasad

1. When was Thyagaraja born?
2. What is Bismillah Khan famous for?
3. How many chapters has Bharatamuni's Natya Shashtra?
4. Who are the authors of "Natya Darpana"?
5. Name the person who rejuvenated the Kuchipudi Natya?
6. Date of Thyagaraja's Death?
7. Name a few *sushira vadyas*.
8. Who is a Keertana vidwan?
9. Name the divisions of Manodharma Sangeetha.
10. Name a few vidwans who name ragas for expellation.

(Solutions to Quiz-1 on page 14)

Dear Reader

Your comments and views are most valuable to us and the others too. We shall gladly publish the best. But, for maximum impact and better coverage, make them brief. Send your comments to:

The Editor
PHOENIX
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar,
Bangalore 560009

RRK

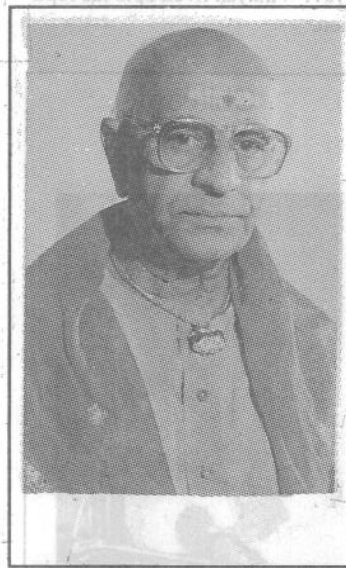
The Indefatigable Sadhaka

Elsewhere in this issue is a note on a violin solo of veteran R.R. Keshavamurthy broadcast recently over the AIR. The highlight of that recital was Kedaragoula (Venugana loludu). As the virtuoso unfolded the majestic melody, one was struck by the depth of his technique and imagination, accounting for the completeness to his music. As is his wont, the tone was a little harsh, but the 'gamakas' and 'sangatis' were clear, heightening the total gestalt of the rendition. It was good music, his playing standing out for its elegant coherence.

Though on the wrong side of eighty, what a control he exercises both on his mode and mood! That indeed is the speciality of Keshavamurthy, a "sadhaka" right through, a "sadhana" which has given him complete control both over his music and the instrument.

Like most artistes of his generation, the octogenarian was brought up in an exclusive musical coterie. Training in music was imparted to him early in life by his father Ramaswamiah, a vocalist and violinist of considerable prowess. That, however was only the ground work, a sound one at that no doubt. Even at that stage, Keshavamurthy had a vision of his own, to fulfil which he went to masters like Chikka Ramarao and later to Bidaram Krishnappa, one of the pillars of the cultural edifice that the Mysore palace of that era was, to become one of his best-known disciples.

Which means he was a contemporary of the famous T. Chowdiah. Yes, like the latter Keshavamurthy also perfected the seven-stringed variation, though most of his disciples including the late Anoor Ramakrishna had opted for the original five-stringed violin.



But for some inexplicable reason, Keshavamurthy did not win as much and as fast a recognition as his contemporaries did. True, to be a contemporary could be as much an advantage as a disadvantage. In many instances the only satisfaction could be to be known as a compeer of such stalwarts. And in the case of Keshavamurthy, his was a time when not only Chowdiah, but stalwarts like Rajamanickiam Pillai, Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu, Papa Venkataramiah, Mayavaram

Govindaraja Pillai, to name only a few, reigned supreme. As cadging for favors is not in his nature, Keshavamurthy remained contented to lay low and has never regretted it either. He took his chances as they came and as luck would have it, they came in trickles, certainly not enough to fully exhibit his innate talent.

In such adverse circumstances and in the face of stiff competition, what he has achieved is something commendable. His stature in music circles is as high as any others of his generation, having displayed his virtuosity as emphatically as a soloist and an accompanist. Having completed the degree course, he can express himself lucidly in both Kannada and English and his lecture-demonstrations to numerous distinguished gatherings have been received with utmost respect.

More importantly, Keshavamurthy has to his credit as many as 14 works on subjects relating to music. They are invaluable for students of music. Equally significant is his role as a teacher, a role which has given him supreme satisfaction. Though not as dramatically as in other cases, recognition has not been denied to him after all. The most coveted of them all is the prestigious "Kanaka-Purandhara" prashasti, the highest honour for music in the State. The two revered Peethadhipatis of Rambhapuri and Sringeri have conferred titles on him and the Bangalore Gayana Samaja, the premier music sabha of the South had invited him to preside over one of its annual conference. He is also the recipient of the Chowdiah Memorial award of the Academy of Music. The State Sangeet-Nritya Academy of which he was a member for more than one term, has also honoured him with its award and the Rajyotsava Award came to him just before the "Kanaka-Purandhara".

All in all, his is a life not without its challenges, challenges which he has met dispassionately so as to be at peace with the world.

Mysore Dancer makes a Mark

After the visual holiday spurt, with several NRI groups vying with local talent to hog headlines there has been an inexplicable slump in the City's dance scene. The only exception is a couple of recitals under the auspices of the Every Friday Cultural fare at Yavanika.

One of them was a dancer from Mysore, the erstwhile seat of culture in the State. The dancer Kiran Ganesh, a student of Vasundhara Doreswamy, is certainly no novice, though she was being seen in the City for the first time. Besides distinctions in examinations, Kiran has several prizes to her credit. Nor is she short of stage experience.

All this was borne out in her elegant stance. Her 'thattu-mettu' is equally steady as evidenced in the two-tier invocatory of a Mallari and Ganesha Panchakam. The Nritta forays in the contrived varnam "Srikrishna Kamalanatho" (Ritigoula) culled out from "Sri Krishna Kamamritam", revealed a strict adherence to 'anga-shudham', though her 'are mandi' could not stand the test of proportion. But the abandon with which she disposed of the 'theermanams' was reassuring.

But the choice of the repertoire, including the Varnam left much to be desired. None of the pieces could meet the demands of 'rasabhinaya', the underlying 'rasa' in each case being 'Bhakti' which falls outside the purview of 'nava rasas'. Evocation for the Varnam as also the Kanada padam "Elliruvano" was fines to a

description of Krishna, and in the Delineation appeared redundant.

The musical support in the wings was as revealing. Guruprasad's vocal refrain was undoubtedly a high-spot in the 90 minute fare, while Vasundhara's Nattuvangam was fairly assertive.

Under the same banner, later in the month was seen another artiste of note. Nalini Prakash, a student of Sudharani Raghupathy of Madras, is also a new face and hails from outside the State. Her stance and confidence with which she ran through a compact programme made an immediate impact on receptive audience.

Nalini Revealed a firm grasp of the grammar of dance in the invocatory stage itself. Her 'angikas' were well defined and the 'charis' not short of variety. But her facials, as exemplified in the varnam "Vanamayile" (Shanmukhapriya) had their limitation. The underlying 'virahotkhandita' nayika came alive only in the 'ethukade' stage. The piece, therefore, had to sustain on the Nritta which one must concede was substantial.

Another dance programme which deserves note for its sheer choreographic adventure is "Daksha Yagna", a dance drama froup under B.J.Meera. It was part of the 141st Birthday celebrations of Narayana guru. Hence, the justification of Malayalam script.

Yet the denouncement was so dramatic that it was not beyond the comprehension of the learned and the laity alike. Though the mixed group comprised both Bharatanatyam and

Kuchipudi dancers, the two Kuchipudi exponents, Shibu Joseph and Deepa, both disciples of the famed Manju Bhargavi, were head and shoulders above their Bharathanatyam counterparts. In their lead roles, they carried the day!

Stories like 'Daksha Yagna' certainly are not irrelevant as a layman's delight. But it calls for a certain amount of refinement if they have to sustain the interest of the urban elite. Especially out of tune were the sequences where the Shiva Ganas make their appearance. One wonders how lord Shiva, the embodiment of 'Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram' could account for such crude elements! Obviously, it is conceived to cadge to popular appeal.

Though the choreography lent itself was stamp of coherence was in "Shivashtakam", highlighting an aspect of Shiva Tandava. Naturally too, as the credit for its choreography goes to veteran Vempati Chinna Satyam!

ESSENCE

If you want your products
reach music lovers
Advertise in

PHOENIX

A Magazine on Dance and
Music

R.K. Srikantan Joins the Galaxy

S.N. Chandrasekhar

The tidings from across the border that one of our esteemed vocalists, R.K. Srikantan has been selected for the year's "Sangeeta Kalanidhi" title of the Music Academy, Madras has heartened all music-lovers of the State. It is a distinction which had eluded him for long and it is good that the leading music organisation of the country has at last recognised his contribution to music, choosing him to preside over the prestigious annual conference later this year.

Srikantan himself is no stranger to that august body of musicians. He has been a regular invitee at its annual events for nearly four decades, both as a performer and for lecture demonstrations. Even otherwise, his reputation as a consistent performer in that citadel of Carnatic Music, as much as he is in his home state, is unquestioned. He is as popular in the other centres of Tamil Nadu, Andhra and Kerala as he is in the Hindustani belt.

Yet as destiny would have it, it took almost 10 years after veteran vainika V.Doreswamy Iyengar was conferred the title for another artiste of similar stature from Karnataka to get the coveted honour. With that he joins a galaxy of his compatriots like Mysore Vasudevacharya, Rallapalle Ananthakrishna Sharma, T.Chowdaiah and Dr. Iyengar. Indeed, it is well deserved, a crowning glory to an illustrious career that is studded with distinctions all the way.

In this connection, it may not be out of place to recall that when speaker after speaker at a function got up to



Srikantan and his wife

felicitate the maestro on his 75th birthday were singing plaudits on his achievements, the one thought uppermost in their minds was that he was not favored for this title which is

almost the ultimate in the life of a musician. They included Dr.Semmagudi Srinivasa Iyer, the doyen of Carnatic music, who was himself generous in his references to Srikantan's standing in the genre. Those blessings which Srikantan himself have valued immensely, has borne fruit much to the delight of his numerous admirers here and elsewhere.

Yes, it is no exaggeration if one were to say that Srikantan has won as many awards outside the State as in it. Why, among his many honours is an "Asthana Vidwan" of the Sri Venkateswara temple in Pittsburgh, U.S.A. Equally worthy of mention is the privilege of being the visiting professor of a Canadian University, the other university which has honoured him similarly being the Palghat University in Kerala.

But strange as it may seem unlike most of his contemporaries, neither Srikantan himself nor anyone of his equally reputed brothers violinist, R.K. Venkatarama Sastry or Vocalists. R.K. Narayana swamy and R.K.Ramanathan had enjoyed the status of an 'Asthana Vidwan' in Mysore. Though he had started giving recitals almost at the same time he began his schooling, recognition came to Srikantan only after he joined the AIR as a staff artiste, first at Mysore and later in Bangalore when the station moved over there. During a career spanning nearly 30 years, Srikantan served the institution in varied capacities-



Srikantan at a concert



M.S. Sheela

-a performer, producer of features and retired as Producer of Music, the highest position that an artiste can aspire to in that governmental set up.

As the veteran artiste himself confesses, the AIR had not only given him opportunities to exhibit his innate talent, but helped him to come into contact with eminent personalities in the field of art and letters. But the programme which made him a household name in Karnataka is his weekly music lesson. These programmes won for him innumerable admirers many of whom became his students. Among them many have made a grade both on the AIR as well as on the concert stage. His own son R.S. Ramakanth, M.S. Sheela,



Sume Sudhindra

T.S. Sathyavati, Uma Gopalaswamy and Vainikas Suma Sudhindra and Shanti Rao are a few of them.

Srikantan turned 75 only a couple of months ago. He was born at Rudrapatnam, a small hamlet in Hassan district on the banks of the Cauvery, on the auspicious day of Pongal, 1920. His father Krishna Sastry a well-known Harikatha vidwan of his times, was his first guru. Later he came under the tutelage of his elder brother R.K. Venkatarama Sastry, senior student of the violin maestro T. Chowdaiah. But he evolved a style of his own, his open-mouth technique



S.R.S. Ramakanth

known as much for its modulation as to 'sahitya shuddhi'. It is an eclectic style. He had a vision of his own for an artistic flight soaring high. To reach it he needed reinforcements from every available source. And that is what he did, an exercise which demanded incessant 'sadhana', going through a process of assimilation and transformation. Anyone conversant with the creative functioning in the art can well imagine that this metamorphosis means continued intellectual pursuit combined with arduous practice. Even to this day when he has been recognised as a master and fondly referred to as "Dikshitar" by his admirers, Srikantan is as steadfast in his 'sadhana' as he is meticulous in his teaching. That is what has kept him



Shanti Rao

trim and can withstand the rigours of a four-hour concert, endearing himself as much to his supporting accompanists as to his listeners.

Indeed, his singing is as fresh and sensitive as it was in his youth, a tribute to the care and attention he has paid to his vocal chords, worthy of the sobriquet "Sirikantha". May that 'rich timbre' endure is the fond wish of all his admirers!

Next Issue

Bangalore Gayana Samaja's march in 90 years. S.N. Chandrasekhar traces its glorious history.

27th Music Conference of Bangalore Gayana Samaja

Heritage Kala Utsav of Sterling Resorts and Nada Surabhi Cultural Festivals, M. Surya Prasad takes a look at the festivals.

Cassettes Causerie

Calling AIR

Young Talents and many more interesting columns.

Udupi Hosts Memorable Venu Utsav

Bangalore K Venkataram

Karnataka Sangeetha Nruthya Academy organised a Venu Utsav at Udupi on September 23 and 24, 95. The local Paryaya Sheerumutt had hosted the two day fare.

Apart from the inaugural and valedictory sessions, there were symposia of different aspects of flute and dance recitals. His Holiness Sri Lakshmvira Thirtha Sripadagalavaru inaugurated the festival. K. Ramamurthy Rao, convener, welcomed the invitees. Chandrabhaga Devi, chairperson of the Academy, presented a brief on the Academy's projects. Durga Avarthi, Registrar proposed a vote of thanks.

Loka V Shankar in the inaugural recital regaled with 'Ganamurthe' and 'Bala Gopala' (Bhairavi). She was supported by B. Raghuram and S.R. Anantharaman on violin and mrudanga respectively.

A. V. Prakash commenced with a Chowdiah composition in Bahudari 'Prasanna Ganapathe'. His Lathangi and Shuddhasaveri were neat. He was supported by H.K. Narasimhamurthy and Jayachandra Rao on violin and mrudanga.

H.K. Raghavendra Rao, a local artist supported by H.K. Narasimhamurthy and Jayachandra Rao on violin and mrudanga dwelt at length on Kanada. Veteran V Desikachar opted for compositions on Krishna, like 'Ganamurthy', 'Venuganalodu', 'Baro', 'Madhava Mamava' etc. He was



M.A. Chandankumar

supported by Ananthapadmanabha and M. Gururaja on violin and mrudanga.

M.A. Chandankumar, great-



Loka V Shankar

grandson of Chowdiah had M.G. Narahari and P. Nataraj for his accompanists. He also chose Lathangi, besides Bindumalini and Kaanada. A compact fare. Kumari Vani, supported by M.G. Narahari and H.L. Shivashankar started with 'Ganamurthe'. She elaborated Madhyamavathi while K.P. Upadhyaya supported by H.N. Bhaskar and H.L. Shivashankar rendered on impressive Saraswathi,

Janaranjani and Ranjani were the other pieces.

A 'Jugalbandi' featuring Mariraja Menadala (Hindustani) and G. Rajnarayan (Karnatic) was marked more on sound than Nada, with the tabla exceeding the acceptable decibel levels. The flutists themselves played regas Hamsadhvani and Abhogi with restraint and understanding, despite the tendency to accelerate by the Hindusthani artiste.

Sandhya and Kiran presented a dance duet 'Kolaline Kare', while Nirupama and Rajendra presented a Kathak fare.

The highlight of the festival was the symposia. The first symposium dealt with the historical and literary aspects linked with the celestial instrument. The key note address of the noted scholar B.V.K. Shastri read by M.S. Sheela referred to Curt Sachs and Pannalal Ghosh to trace the past, contemporary scene and the prospects of electronic instruments in future.



T.R. Srinath

Lakshmitatachar quoted reference on flute in Sanskrit literature while Rama Bennur drew on the many reference in Kannada literature. M. Rajagopalacharya referred to the Gramas and Samaveda (Nada Shiksha) and the Kharaharapriya and Harikambodhi scales (Bharatha Kosha).

S.N. Chandrashekar, noted critic, chaired the session.

The afternoon session was chaired by Eswariah, editor, Udayavani. The paper of V. Sampathkumaracharya on historical reference to flute was read by K. Ramamurthy Rao. The session centered round the technical aspects of flute. T.R. Srinath referred to the different blowing and fingering techniques including cross fingering and flat fingering. He stressed on the 'speaking length of the air column' in the flute.

Balakrishna Thantri explained his experiments on the instruments like the PVC flutes, multipurpose flutes, adjustable flutes etc. He recalled the services of Nagercoil Ananthaarayanan, Sundaram, (father of flutist Raghu and Ravi) and Madras Shankaralingam. G. Rajnarayan explained the science behind the production of sounds and referred to the vibrations. Variations in pressure due to movement of side and straight blowing, tracing the origins to closed end pipes (like key rods).

Eswariah in his presidential address said, classical arts were not for the masses. Refinement and elevation of taste were to be acquired by incessant listening and getting exposed to the arts.

The third symposium focussed on the flute in different styles. K.S.

Rajesh spoke on flute in Hindusthani style, with a demonstration on the bansuri. Bangalore K Venkataram traced the elevation to concert status by Sarabha Sastry from its supporting status, popularisation by Palladam Sanjeeva Rao and the elevation to the present exalted status by flute wizard, T.R. Mahalingam (Mali). He also referred to the present day lower sruti flutes and the contemporary state of art practiced by B.N. Suresh and the techniques adopted by N. Ramani.

Dwaraki Krishnaswamy assisted by Maithili demonstrated flute's effectiveness in dance. H.S. Anasuya Kulkarni exhibited flutes of several countries like Indonesia, Papua-New Guinea, Ethiopia, the Phillipines and Thailand were the countries from where she exhibited these flutes. She also demonstrated the playing on some.

The valedictory session chaired by Chandrabhaga Devi was addressed by veteran flutist M.R. Doreswamy. The Paryaya Mutt Sear delivered the benedictory address.

A noteworthy aspect of the entire proceedings was the punctuality maintained right through.

Significantly, this is the first time that so many flutists gathered on a common dais at the pilgrim centre of Lord Krishna, Udupi. If all the papers were to be published, that would be a notable contribution of documentation on the popular wind instrument.

Solutions to Qu?z-1

1. May 4, 1767 (Sarvajitu Samvatsara Chaitra Bahula Panchami).

2. Outstanding Shehanai player.

3. 36

4. Ramachandra and Gunichandra

5. Siddhendra Yogi

6. January 6, 1847 (Prabhava Samvatsara Pushya Bahula Panchami, Wednesday)

7. Flute, Nagaswara, Mukha Veena, Shehnai, Clarinet.

8. A specialist in rendering musical compositions (krithis).

9. Ragalapana, Madhyama kala (tana, ghana), Pallavi, Neraval and Kalpanaswaras.

10. Todi Sitaramayya, Athana Appayya, Todi Sundara rao, Shankarabharana Narasayya, Begade Subramanya Ayyar (Patnam), Narayanagowla Kuppayyar (Veena Kuppayyar), Bhairavi Kempegowda.

For a ring side view of dance and music performance, read
PHOENIX

The Unity in Carnatik Music

R.K.Srikantan

In the modern endeavor of education in Carnatik Music, it is the wish of all who value it that its essential features should not be ignored. The medium and technique of any art is put to a new and strange effectiveness by the master artistes. The musician is a painter of sounds. Sounds are his colours, melody and rhythm are light and shade, his own unique personality and imagination are twin brushes with which he creates beautiful forms on the canvas of his voice. The language of art is different in technique and more difficult of acquirements than while studying the three ragas.

Music is intangible and emotional in its essence and substance. The edifice of all art is built on values eternal and absolute in human life, not on those which are contingent and topical.

Muthuswamy Dixitar describes goddess Balambika as "bhava, raga, tala modineem". Tyagaraja describes Lord Rama as "shining like a beacon light on the mountain of nada of seven swaras" (Samajavaragamana) and "samaniga majasudhamaya gana Vichakshana". Lord Genesha is "rakti bhakti bhava sahitanaka tadhara".

The fundamental units of Carnatik music then are, rakti, bhakti, bhava, raga and tala. In all the classical musical compositions there is a unification of all these elements. "The parts must be knitted together to get a harmonious whole" applies to music in the striving for achievement of a synthesis of bhava, raga and tala. A person without bhakti cannot perform his karma in the right spirit and also a

person devoid of gnana cannot enter into the cloisters of bhakti in the discharge of his karma. Similarly a true version of music can be obtained only with the three dimensional effect of bhava, raga and tala, as music is a vanishing architecture. Tyagaraja, Dixitar and Shyama Sastry have founded different schools and styles of Carnatik music. In Tyagaraja's melodies bhava acts as a central force, in Dixitar's ragas, and in Shyama Sastry's tala. In each of these schools a perfect unity of the three fundamental units has been brought out by the different workmanship of the three past-masters of Carnatik music. Tyagaraja has pitched upon the Ramayana as the theme for his music. The epic stands immortal for the depicting of all human emotions in the most simple sonorous language. Tyagaraja appeals to Rama in various moods and expresses his lofty thoughts and high ideals with all simplicity and ease. He does not bring in the complex intricacies of tala. His handling of apoorva ragas with perfect ease is a remarkable feature of his compositions. The aesthetic merit and scientific approach in his composition are revealed in the kalpana of the sangatees. The emotional trend is developed by the beautiful craftsmanship of sangatees. The poet's choice of words and the formation of the sentences breathe the odour of prosody to such peaceful extent that one cannot mark the collision of rhythm and melody.

The outstanding aspect of Dixitar's compositions is the analytical approach of raga swaroopa. Every composition is a masterly achieve-

ment abiding by the raga paddhati and alapana krama. If, at times, a raga is begun in the higher octave, the student is taught how to develop the raga form in a classical way. The vilambita kala of the composition with the relief of the madhyama kala at each anga of the kriti brings in the effect of tala. The choice of the Sanskrit language enhances the majesty and grandeur of Carnatik music. The emotional side of the composer is sublimated in the emphasis of purely ananda aspect with a persistent dispassion. The scholarly attainments in astrology and Literature enabling him to exploit the kshetrapuranas and critical study of the several deities.

Shyama Sastry's approach to bhakti and bhava is unique. There is an atmosphere of hopefulness and tenderness from the sincere heart of a child. In Tyagaraja there is the full mystic maturity of a philosopher and in Dixitar, the detached nature of a metaphysician.

Shyama Sastry has revelled in the intricacies of rhythm and has merged the raga swaroopa and bhava with Tala. With the introduction of Sangati Tyagaraja has enriched the bhava of a composition, while Shyama Sastry has enhanced the richness of rhythm in the handling of Sangatis. His choice of the Chapu tala reveals his rhythmic pattern. He has cared more for style in music and hence the raga swaroopa features as a powerful picture, with the stress and strain produced by the rhythmic effect prevalent in his compositions.

Dixitar's compositions are Miltonic. The three colours of these compositions do not lie in the over lengthened vilambita kala but in the correctness of blending the tala and bhava in the raga form.

Thus in the study of great composers the student of Carnatik music is guided at every step, how a perfect integration is effected in the three fold path of bhava, raga and tala.

Set your Jewellery with
Fine quality

Americal Diamonds

Ask for

Kumar Gems

SriLakshmi Vittobha Complex, 160 Big Bazar,
Tiruchirapally 620008 © 31359

LAKSHMI JEWELLERY COMPANY

NAGARTHPET, BANGALORE 560002

© 2212635 Estd 1940

Dealers in:

Precious and Semi Precious Stones

Manufacturers of:

Shields, Trophies, Lapel Badges and Medals

Cassette



Causerie

Vasudeva Keerthana Manjari
(Sri Sharada Kala Kendra Vol. 16 Rs 30)

V.Kalavathi-Singer; Nalina Mohan-Violin; V.Krishna-Mridanga and M.A. Krishna-Ghata.

Sri Sharada Kala Kendra of popular vocalist R.K.Padmanabha has rendered yeoman service to Carnatic music. Its cassette series comprising the compositions of Mysore Vasudevacharya has proved very useful to learners and performers alike. As many as 15 such cassettes are already in the market, compositions rendered by Padmanabha and his vocal partner D.V.Nagarajan, R.K.Srikantan and M.S.Sheela. The 16th volume highlights many more masterpieces of the celebrated composer. They are rendered by young V.Kalavathi, a



promising disciple of the late Anoor Ramakrishna. The cassette is sure to become as popular as its predecessors.

ESSENCE
Saxophone by K. Anantharam
(Sangeetha-Stereo. Rs 30)

The master Recording Company of Madras, this time has cut a compact concert on Saxophone by K.Anantha ram of Mangalore. Like his senior from the same town, Kadari Gopinath, the youngster has mastered the technique of this essentially western instrument. His blowing power is remarkable as is evidenced in the easy flow of the soulful melody Gowla. Hindola, Arabhi, Yamuna Kalyani, Hamsadhwani and Mohana are among the other ragas. There is no lack of 'ragabhava' in the rendition, Mohana (Sadapalaya) among them standing out for its modal grace.

ESSENCE
Thyagaraja Krithis

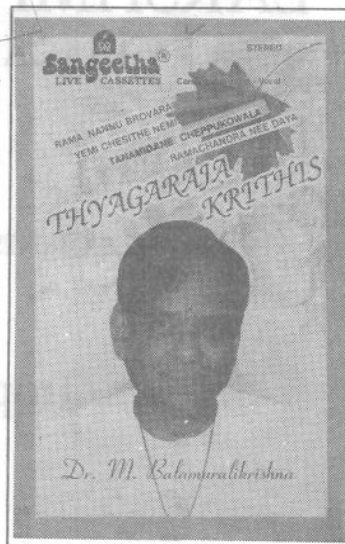
Carnatic classical vocal:
Dr.M.Balamuralikrishna; Sangeetha live cassettes 6 ECDB 584 Stereo.

Songs rendered: Side A: 'Ramanannu brovara' (Harikambhoji); 'Emi

jesiti nemi' (Todi). Side B - - 'Tanamidane cheppukovala' (Bhoosavali) and 'Ramachandra nee daya' (Suruti).

Dr.M.Balamuralikrishna, the well-known vocalist has done full justice to the krithis and ragas in this cassette. Melodious and multi-ranged voice and sensitivity mark his singing. He opens with an alapana in madhya sthayi in Harikambhoji raga. The entire gamut of the raga is covered in the elaboration. Rendering of the charana 'Meppula kai' in madhyama kala is attractive. The expansive and enchanting Todi has fine details. The akaara sangathee in faster tempo and even sometimes in ati tara sthayi are evocative. The krithi is embellished by nominal swaras.

On side B, a quaint raga and krithi is rendered. Raga Bhoosavli, a derivative of 64th melakarta Vachaspathi, is a shadhava - - sampooma raga. Imagine Kambhoji with prati madhyama, you could visualise the above raga. Balamurali's alapana is both educative and enjoyable. The krithi "Tanamidane cheppukovala" appeals to the heart. The singer enchants us by presenting "Ramachandra nee daya" in Sruruti raga. B.V.Raghavendra Rao (violin)



and M.Balachandra (Mridanga) have lent appropriate support.

Dr M. Surya Prasad

SHRUTI LAYA SUDHA:

Sangeetha Live Cassettes; 6 ECD 6199 stereo. Saxophone with Tavil. Kadri Gopalnath (Saxophone), A.Kanyakumari (violin), A.K.Palanivel (Tavil), S.Karthick (Ghata) and B.Rajasekhar (Morsing) Krithis rendered: Side A -- "Paratpara Parameshwara" (Vachaspathi; Papanasham Shivan). "Tulasidala" (Mayamalavagowla; Thyagaraja). "Padmanabha Pahimurare" (Hindola; Swati Tirunal).

Side B -- "Upacharamu" (Bhairavi; Thyagaraja) and "Hari Chitta Satya" (Jompuri; Purandaradasa)

This is one of the most interesting and ear-catching cassette, The sushira, avanaddha and tata vaadyaas blend together in a refined manner and evoke beautiful pictures of ragas. The instrumental flourishes do not dilute the aesthetics. The cassette opens with



"Paratpara" tagged with brisk swaravinyas. Vachaspathi brims with beauty in the hands of seasoned Kadri Gopalnath and Kanyakumari. The next song "Tulasidala" is made memorable by detailed kalpanaswaras. The swings and twists of Hindola are magnificently etched in the alapana. "Padmanabha Murare" is ornamented

by swaras. These swaras are not only rhythmically taut but expose all the possibilities on an instrumental play. Detailed delineation of Bhairavi is the mainstay of Side B. The mandra sthayi sancharas in particular catch the attention. The grand krithi of Thyagaraja "Upacharamu" shines with all the musical and artistic grandeur. The giht-minute tani avaratana is an audio treat indeed. Purandaradasa's "Hari chitta satya" (Jonpuri) rendered crisply leaves a lingering impression. The percussionists rise to the occasion and add beauty to the presentations.

Dr.M.Surya Prasad

Those who wish their Audio cassettes reviewed in Phoenix are requested to send two cassettes to:

The Editor
PHOENIX

138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar,
Bangalore 560009

Subscribe to

PHOENIX

a monthly on Music and Dance

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00

Three Years : Rs 140-00

It reaches you by post every month

Send Your Subscriptions to:
The Circulation Manager

PHOENIX

138 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009 © 2263696

T.V.Ramprasad



T.V. Ramprasad, a vocalist was born in 1969 to Vyasa Rao and Rukmini, noted musicians, Ramprasad evinced interest in Karnatic music at five. He was initiated into music by R.R. Keshavamurthy and sought higher studies under T.V. Gopalakrishnan, S. Rajam and D. Pasupathy.

He has established himself as a vocalist with infinite patience and concentration. His style of singing devotionals has earned him fame. He has sung in the AIR South Zone Music Concert and has appeared several times on the TV.

Ramprasad has given concerts in all major sabhas and cultural festivals of the country. He has toured UK and recorded music to two albums of Sangeetha Recording Co and Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

He is the recipient of "Gayana Gandharva" title of Delhi Karnataka Sangha, The All India Best Singer Award of Sangeethayan, New Delhi and the 'Best Vocalist award' in the Yuva Sangeetha Nrithya Mahotsav organised by the South Zone Cultural Centre.

T.V.Ramprasad
504 Girija Apts, "A" Block Cross,
J.P. Nagar, II Phase,
Bangalore 560078 © 646629

Indira Kadambi



Indira Kadambi learnt Bharatnatyam under the renowned Kalamandalam Usha Datar, Narmada and Savithri Jagannatha Rao. She was trained in the aspects of Abhinaya by Kalanidhi Narayan and Mohiniattam under Kalyani Kuttiamma. To add lustre to her art, Indira had a stint under Belakavadi Srinivasa Iyengar for music.

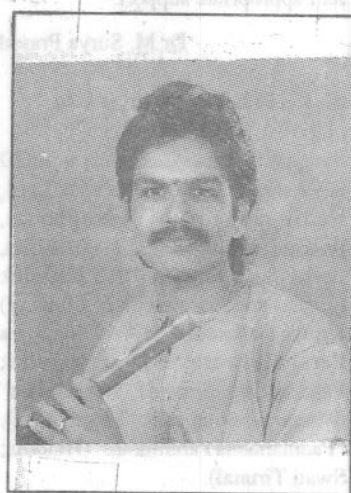
Indira had her "arangetram" when 16 since then she has never looked back. She is a dancer of grace each performance is a class by itself. Flawless hand movements, neat footwork and modest abhinaya distinguish her recitals. Music is provided by her able husband, T.V. Ramprasad.

Indira has danced in a number of cultural festivals, including the tours in the UK and Germany, conducting workshops on the classical idiom.

Indira in association with her husband has established the Naadanta Academy of Dance and Music in Bangalore. She is a faculty member of Bharatnatyam at Nrityagram, Bangalore.

Indira Kadambi
504 Girija Apts, :A: Block,
Cross, J.P. Nagar, II Phase,
Bangalore 560078 © 646629

V.K.Raman



V. K. Raman (26), a flutist was born in Mysore. Student of A.V.Prakash, he was greatly influenced by Maestros T.R.Mahalingam and N. Ramani is his art.

Recipient of junior and senior scholarship of the Union Government for music, he is a first rank holder in the Government music examination. He has won the first prize in the AIR national level instrumental music competition and the "Surmani" title of Sur Singer Samsad, Bombay.

Raman has developed an impressive style of playing having successfully come out of the main shortcomings of flutists like control on speed and sense of shruti.

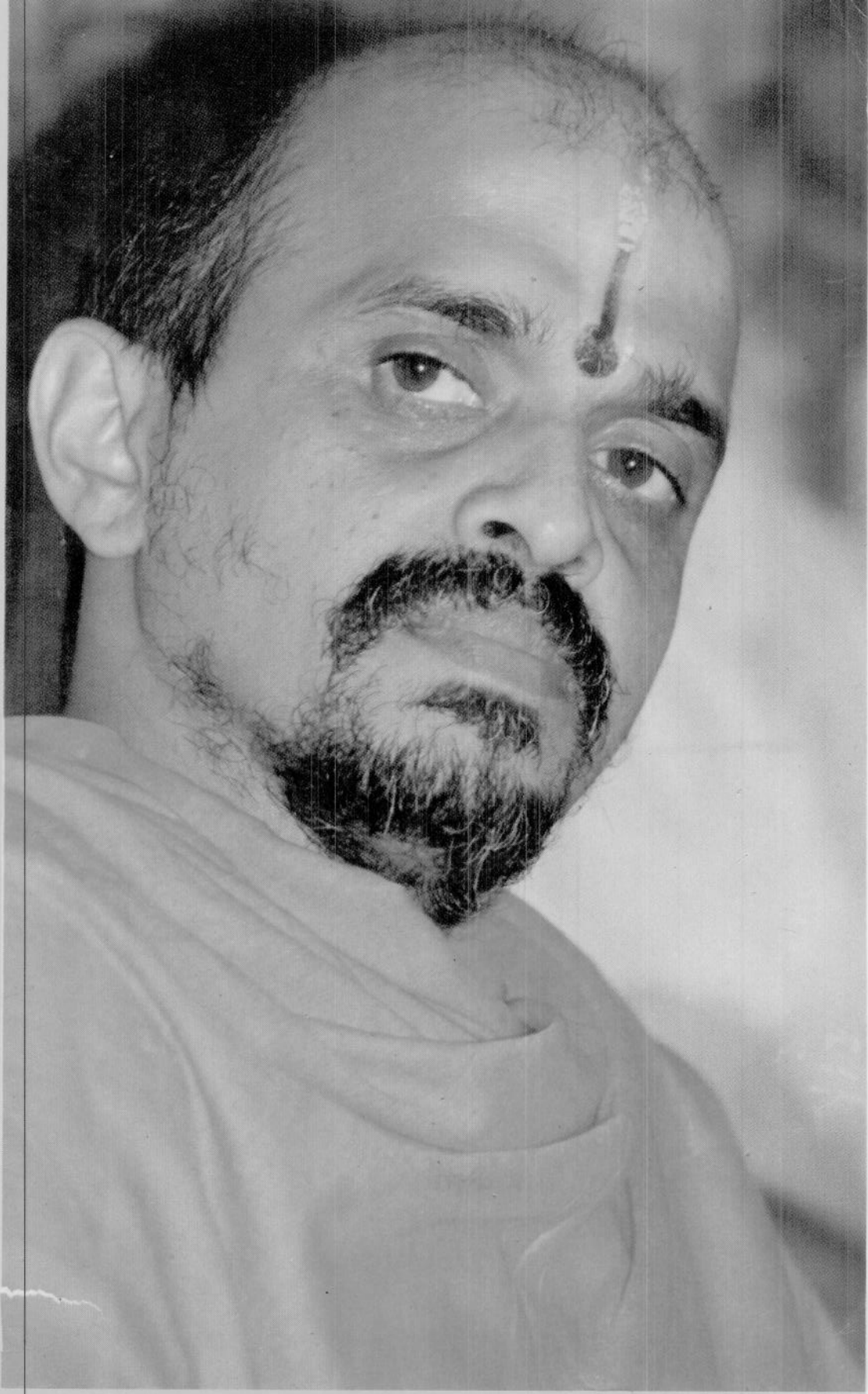
Raman has composed music for many light and devotional songs for audio cassettes and is popular as a performer in many parts of the country. He has toured Japan and Switzerland as a member of cultural troupes.

V.K.Raman
KA (322) Kailash Apts, 8th Main,
Malleswaram, Bangalore 560003
© 331 4259

By A.P.Rao

March 96

5-00



While setting your jewellery with
fine quality

American Diamonds

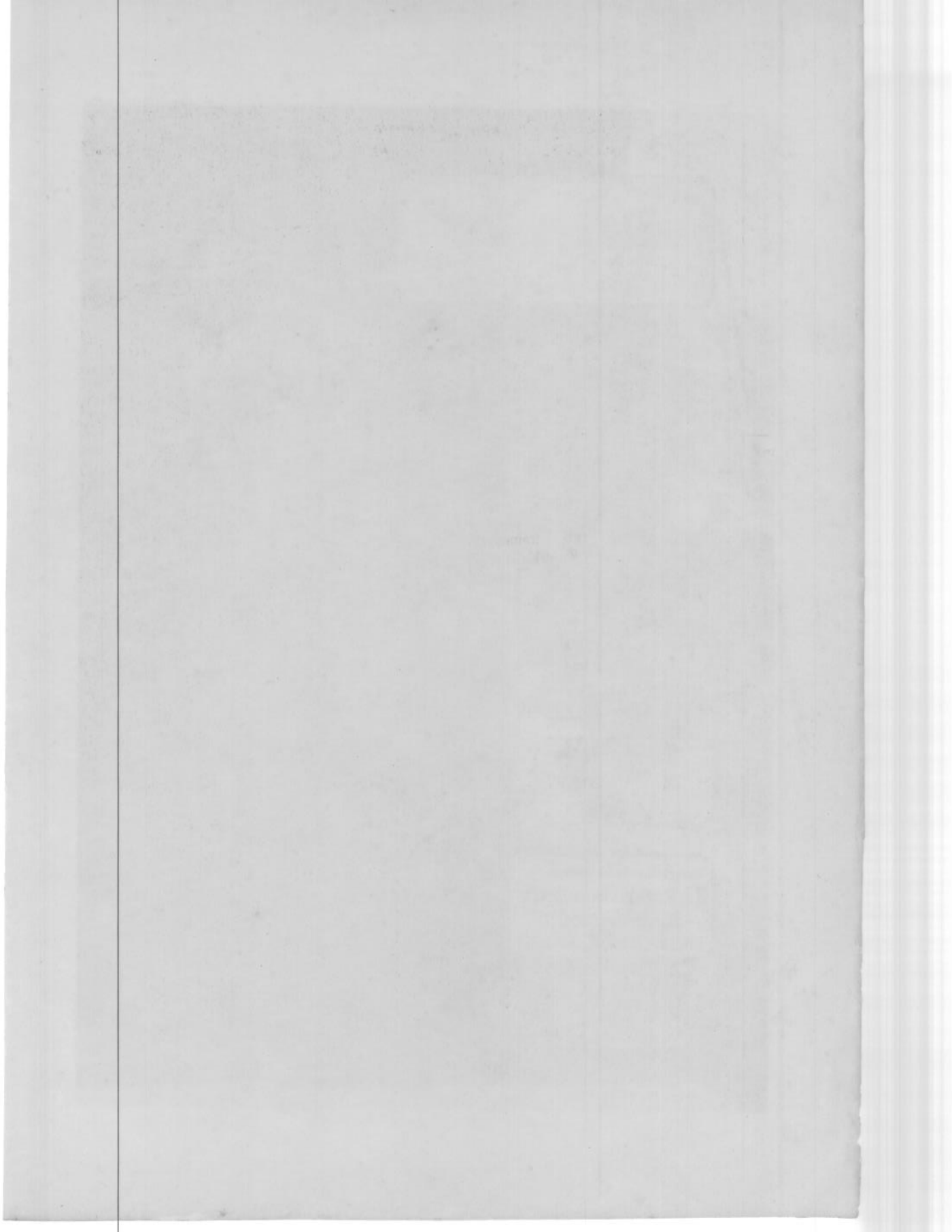
Ask only for

Kumar Gems

Pioneers in the field of synthetic diamonds for
over two decades

Kumar Gems

SriLakshmi Vittobha Complex, 160 Big Bazar,
Tiruchirapally 620008 © 31359



Vaishnavi
RANGE
with Designers Tussles

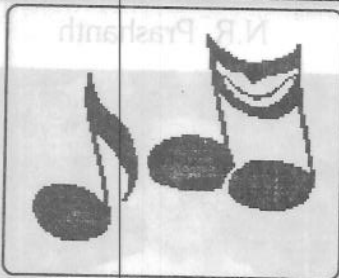
Meerakshi
Silks & Crepes

Choice of over
50 Designs
to choose

Manufactured and Marketed by :
Radhakrishna & Co.
Bangalore 560 002
Phone: 2213748, 2241567

Available in all
leading Stores in
India and abroad

9610-161252



PHOENIX

Journal on Music and Dance

Vol 1

March 1996

No 5

S.N.Chandrasekhar

67 Basappa Layout
Bangalore 560018 ☎ 6675758

Bangalore K Venkataram

183, 8th Cross, II Bl, Jayanagar
Bangalore 560011 ☎ 6630079

Dr M. Surya Prasad

'Munikoti' 8, II Cross, Balepet
Bangalore 560053 ☎ 2253975

Editors

N.Sundarraaj

138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009 ☎ 2263696

Managing Editor

B. Rajashekar

☎ 2216459

Advertising Manager

Representatives

Ganapathi Bhat

Hubli -Dharwar

K. Ramamurthy Rao

Mysore

Geeta Raja

9 Chhaya, Jam-e-Jamshed Road
Matunga, Bombay 400019

☎ 412 2074

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00

Three Years: Rs 140-00

Please send all remittances to

PHOENIX

The Circulation Manager

138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar

Bangalore 560009 ☎ 2263696

RN 45468/87

Contents

Readers' Write

Editorial- Jugalbandi

Dancers as Political Rivals
In the Footsteps of Haridasa

Calling AIR

Shivayogi's Services to Music Recalled

The Little Nattuvanar

Shimoga Fetes Balamurali

Purandarotsava

Another Distinction for Padmini Rao

Impressive Start for Sankranthi

This Issue is

Sponsored by

Somnath

Malleswaram

Bangalore 560003

Tuneful Encounters-3

Bachcha to Bap, Badshah to Fans!

S.N.Sivaswamy



Allauddin Khan

In the earlier days of All India Radio, when I was in AIR, Madras, the stations did not have much funds. They had literally to operate on shoe-string budgets. Nevertheless, thanks for a system we had evolved, what is called "chain booking", we managed to invite great musicians from all over the country to participate in our programmes.

The device was to collaborate programme scheduling with a chain of stations and share the travelling and incidental expenses of the artistes. Thus we were able to present on South Indian stations the music of such all-time greats like Allauddin

Khan, Faiaz Khan, Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan, Hirabai Barodkar, Vilayat Khan, Roshanara Begum, Bade Gulam Ali Khan and the whole galaxy of them.

Allauddin Khan and his son Ali Akbar Khan, already a legend, had been invited by us on this 'chain booking' plan.

Allauddin Khan was known as the ustad of ustad. Look at the stalwarts among his disciples: Ali Akbar Khan, Ravi Shankar, Nikhil Banerji, Pannalal Ghosh - the list is endless.

We sat engrossed before the masters in the recording studio as he stunned the raga Multani with his magical fingers. His sitar spoke to each one of us evoking our inner most artistic feelings. The atmosphere in the studio was ecstatic as was the Ustad's face as he concentrated on the nuances of the raga with closed eyes.

When the rendering was over and Alauddin Khan placed the sitar in its covering, our Director remarked that the occasion was unique, in that his recital succeeded another memorable recording, on the sarod, by his son, Ali Akbar Khan.

To this, Allauddin Khan's stunning comment went something like this: "Voh kya bajata hai? Voh abhi bachcha hai!" ("What does he play? He is still a child!")

N.R. Prashanth



Vocalist, N.R. Prashant (28) is the son of Rama Prasanna, who can execute music in all the three octaves is the disciple of R.K. Padmanabha. Now he is being guided by Neyveli Santhanagopalan of Madras.

His melodious voice and neat rendering of rare compositions have earned him appreciations from musicians and critics.

Prashanth has attended workshops on music conducted by leading musicians and has been adjudged as the best musician in junior concerts of Bangalore Gayana Samaja in 1993.

He is a B grade artiste in AIR and has performed in all the major cities in our country.

Prashant is an engineering graduate in Instrumentation from Malnad Engineering College and has now taken music as full time carrier and dedicates himself to uphold the traditional classic Carnatic music.

N.R. Prashanth
895, 20th Main, New 38th Cross 4th
T Block, Jayanagar
Bangalore 560041 ☎ 663 4021

A.P. Rao, 741, 'Abhiman'
7th Cross, III Block, Koramangala,
Bangalore 560034 ☎ 5532658

Editorial

Jugalbandi

Jugalbandi is by no means a new word in the musical terminology. It simply means a duet, but a duet with a difference. Whereas in a duet there is a similarity in the combination, whether vocal or instrumental, it is just the contrary in a Jugalbandi. This dissimilarity may be of form or the instruments that are involved.

That is why its use by two major sponsors of Hindustani music in the City recently becomes debatable. In the first, a concert by the well-known Mishra Brothers, Rajan and Sajan, was listed as a Jugalbandi. It was plain and simple a duet. Another organisation went further to describe a tabla duet by Ustad Alla Rakha and his son Zakir Hussain a Jugalbandi. More intriguing was an experiment with a tabla (Zakir Hussain) accompanying a mandolin solo (U.Srinivas) should have been described as a Jugalbandi. Yet the usual other instruments billed for the concert like a violin (Delhi Sundararajan) and a mridangam (veteran Vellore Ramabhadran) were categorised as accompanists. Obviously, the organisers might have thought that naming a prodigy like Zakir Hussain as a "mere accompanist" could be a denigration. If so, it is not being fair to the very art. Time we learnt to call a spade a spade!

The term Jugalbandi itself gained currency, perhaps when two giants of Hindustani music, Pandit Ravishankar (sitar) and Ustad Ali Akbar Khan (sarod) played together in a concert. Here the form was the same, but the instruments were different. That, verily was an ideal combination for a Jugalbandi. If both were singing the same style of music and playing the same kind of instrument, it would have been a duet and certainly not a Jugalbandi. The pattern is undoubtedly the same, but the connotation is not.

The idea has since caught up, involving all sorts of combinations. The most significant of them all is to juxtapose Hindustani and Carnatic styles of music on the same stage in a single concert. Despite the inevitable compromises that have to be made due to certain peculiarities in either, the experiment is becoming quite popular. Why, instances are not wanting where some twosomes have become regular teams; But from the aesthetic point of view, their impact is ephemeral. But one welcome feature of such experiments is the noteworthy sign of some diehard elements in either style slowly eschewing a persisting apathy to the other. That is reflected in an increasing number of music festivals where artistes representing the other invariably find a place in the bill of fare.

But if the concept has to become really purposeful, the performers should try for greater integration, interweaving their imagination and skill to portray one composite musical picture, instead of the routine airing of one 'avartan' after another alternately. A spirit of competition is desirable so as to arouse excitement. It must also facilitate the appreciation of the subtleties of each style as much by the artistes themselves as by the listeners at large. Then the concept will have achieved some thing concrete:

S.N.Chandrasekhar

Dancers as Political Rivals

Manu Vijay

With the general elections round the corner, what greets one with his morning Cuppa is a story of political intrigue, plot and counter plot, accusations and explanations. These stories often leave me with a feeling of *dejavu*.

I've heard this one before, I say to myself and sit down to ruminate. And soon, it becomes bewilderingly clear: Our dancers, gurus and dance administrators in their eternal struggle for one-upmanship have become such masters in the art of political intrigue that one shudders to think of the consequence, lest they be let loose in the centre.

We have our own party system. The predominant schools of dance, forever asserting their supremacy. And while one shines at a particular period; the others sit in opposition. We have our defectors, but alas! No Anti-Defection Bill!

Corruption is our middle name. Often has the grape vine delivered instances of bribery in the hallowed portals of, yes, the Doordarshan Kendra. While a traditional Mysore crepe saree ensures a 'special' programme, a routine printed silk will probably get you a 20 minute slot in the near (!?) future. Does that remind you of Indira Gandhi's wooing of Chickmagalur's women voters for her famous political come back?

Claims and counter claims of authenticity and purity of style are made, much as various factions fight over party symbols. Journalists and scribes are favoured and rejected, pampered and prodded in keeping with the best

examples of governmental politics. Of course, we have our PMO where it indeed pays to be seen every once in awhile.

Every dancer worth her name must be seen walking briskly out of the

IN LIGHTER VEIN

dusty offices of the Department of Kannada and Culture, for that indicates that she has divine grace (Oh! That Navaratri Programme!) Our bureaucracy indeed stands between the unreachable powers that be, those committees that select dancers for festivals; and us, poor mortals, while we wait, scorched in the sun, like expectant MP's waiting for party ticket.

Lobbying, of course, is a must, for without it where would we be? And of course we have our corporate backing, our Godfathers, our patrons and our own ministers! Just as quotas and seats are reserved for women and minorities in the various schemes dished out by the Government, we have boys and men searching for their place in the sun in a female dominated profession. While far away in Delhi a few people fight the battle of Hindutva, we in cozy Bangalore fight for local recognitions.

We have our T.N. Seshans, the watch dogs with the whiplash tongue, our Lakshmi Parvathis who shine in reflected glory; our militant Bal Thackerays, our Jayalalithas who

imagine that they are above the law of the land; our charismatic Scindhia's, our Manmohan Singhs who actually make a difference, our Chandrashekar's who can't make up their minds, and our own Ramakrishna Hegdes who are in and out all the time.

I do indeed believe that we could teach our respected political representatives a thing or two about schemes and plots. In the long run, dancers, I think would make deadly political rivals for, while PVN's charms are questionable, who would not succumb to the flash of a mascaraed eye, or the flick of a long perfumed braid or that famous red lipped smile!?

31st Anniversary of K.C.P

A ten-day music festival under the aegis of the Karnataka College of Percussion, to celebrate its 31st anniversary of the college was inaugurated by Sri Vidyashankara Bharati of Sri Avani Shankar Mutt at the Adarsha Bhavan, Bangalore.

A book "Sogasuga Mridanga Taalamu Vol III", authored by T.A.S. Mani, principal of the college, and a cassette, 'Naada Vilasini' by R.A. Ramamani were released by A.H. Rama Rao.

Later violin maestros Lalgudi Jayaraman, Lalgudi G.J.R. Krishnan and Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi gave a befitting concert. T.A.S. Mani on mridangam and R.A. Rajagopla on ghatam gave good percussion support.

R.Vishweshwaran of Mysore rendered a neat veena recital accompanied by Umayalapuram Sivaraman on mridangam.

M. Surya Prasad

In the Footsteps of Haridasa

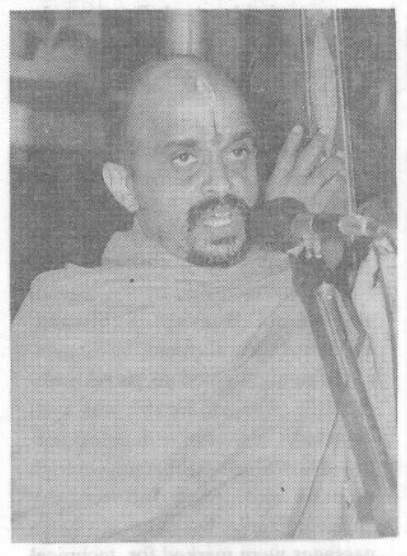
As the Sri Ramanavami is fast approaching, there is music in the air. In the weeks ahead, avid listeners can choose from more than a dozen locales spread over almost all the extensions in the City to muse over their favourite melodies.

Names big and small will fill the agenda, besides a few non-descript elements creeping in to satiate personal fancies. But the one name that is sure to find a place in the bill of fare of all these locales is Swami Vidyabhushana Teertha, Pontiff of the Sri Samputa Narasimhaswamy Subramanya Mutt, Kukke. Less than 10 years ago, he was a nonentity in the world of music. Today, he is the one vocalist no music organisation worth the name can ignore!

He is a minstrel who attracts the learned and laity alike. Whether in a remote place like Srirangam in Tamilnadu where he sang last year in connection with the Festival of Music of Karnataka under the auspices of the Trichy Rasika Ranjani Sabha, or nearer home the 26th Musicians conference of the Karnataka Ganakala Parishat at which he not only gave away awards to the President and other dignitaries, but also figured in the valedictory concert, rasikas could be seen thronging to his mellifluous singing sessions.

The Swami's minstrelsy indeed is verily an emotional outburst, the articulated enunciation of familiar Kannada devotionals especially making an indelible impact. If the discerning mull over his chaste intonation of the classical aria, the multitude would patiently wait for the later half

to devour a veritable treat of choice "Dasara padas". In either case, there is a sense of fulfillment for the organisers.



With all this, it was not a cakewalk for the 42-year old Swamiji to fulfil his ambition of becoming a musician. Though music was in his vein, his father Govindacharya himself having been an accomplished songster, he was inveigled into the monastic order early in his boyhood. As it happens, there is little conviction in such an induction and the Swamiji himself was no exception. He has since not only resented it, but has also given vent to his view against the practice most vehemently. However, he has seemingly compromised, as his responsibilities as a mutt head have not come in the way, or perhaps he has not allowed them to come in the way, of his emerging as a vocalist!

This dual role is not without its challenges. While as a Pontiff of an important religious order he has to

attend to the upkeep of a hallowed tradition, the increasing demand for his concerts constantly keeps him on the move. That he has succeeded in striking a balance between the two avocations speaks for his ambidextrous disposition.

Music, though his first love, has also given rise to considerable problems. In the beginning, his honorarium through concerts was not much. It was just enough to improve the community needs of the hamlet. As gradually the receipts started increasing, it was embarrassing as material possession was against the tenets of monkhood. It is then that the Swamiji decided to build an auditorium, "Govinda Ganasabha" named after his father. The auditorium built to modern specifications not only arranges for the impart of lessons in music to local school children, but organises annual music festivals on a grand scale. The festival this year (in the middle of January) featured such well-known artistes like Balamurali Krishna, T.V. Gopalakrishnan, M. Rajagopala Charya and others. The six-day festival also felicitated some artistes of eminence.

Despite his success as a musician, Sri Vidyabhushana is not the one to rest his oars. His father, his first guru, had no doubt laid a firm foundation in the art. But to hone his style, he approached well-known musicians like R.K. Srikantan and T.V. Gopalakrishnan to enrich his repertoire. But the mainstay of his concerts are the Kannada devotionals, many of them treated on the same level as a kriti with all the attributes of an alpana, nirval and swaraprasthara.

These ditties have become so popular that the sale of the cassettes comprising them has created a record of being the highest. So much so, the Swamiji has fondly come to be referred to as "Cassette Swamiji", a reputation which should remain unchallenged in the near future!

S.N. Chandrasekhar

Remembering Veena Seshanna

A Veena Seshanna Memorial Veena-Sitar festival, organised by Sri Lalitha Kala Academy Trust, Mysore, under the sponsorship of the Department of Kannada and Culture, on February, 8, 9, and 10 featured two veena and two sitar recitals. The venue was Veena Seshanna Bhavana.

The inaugural veena concert was by M.K. Saraswathi, disciple of M.J. Sreenivasa Iyengar and Gowri Kuppuswamy. The alapana for 'Sri' was soothing, swara passages at 'Bhavana Bheda Chature' in Sri Varalakshmi was attractive. Hindustani Kapi with its bhashanga element was depicted with all its appealing charm. Meevalla proved her ability to bring out the Sahitya Bhava. She has indeed mastered the gayaki style.

Kamboji was the main raga of the evening. Starting from thara sthayi, Saraswathi elaborated the raga in the middle octave. The Thana in middle and fast tempo was neat. Pallavi in three kaalas was precise. The swara phrases, the ragamalika covering Athana, Bahudari, Kaanada, and Saraswathi featured, were crisp. The Sawal-Jawab session with the percussionists was engrossing.

Thani awarhana by H.L. Sivasankar and P.S. Sridhar on mridangam and ghatam was marked for finesse in laya and shruti.

The second day's programme started with a sitar recital by Nirmala Sankar Kurtukoti. She started with the evening raga Puriyakalyan, the Karnataka counterpart being 'Gamana-shrama'. A detailed alaap enriched by Jod and Jhala and fol-

lowed by a gat in two speeds of theen taal was imaginative. Her next piece in Shivaranjani was equally attractive. She concluded her recital with a Dhun in Charukesi. Nirmala was accompanied by Asok Pattar on the tabla whose playing sometimes seemed to overpower the main artiste.

The second concert for the day was by R.K. Padmanabha of Bangalore, who played on his 200 year old 'Kanaka Rajatha Saraswathi Veena' gifted to his father, late R.S.Keshavamurthy, by the legendary Veena Bhakshi Subbanna. Padmanabha's alaapana in Sunada- vinodini highlighted all its rakti elements. "Devadi Deva" was well depicted. He gave a detailed portrayal for Shankarabharana through alapana and thana followed by "Nagalingam" of Dikshitar. His swara passages were marked for technical skill, his ability to play off the frets, near the pegs proving his virtuosity.

His adherence to sruti and laya, impeccably is admirable. Use of harmonics, the daatu swaras were typical of the Mysore school of veena.

On the concluding day N.V. Gopinath of Bangalore, a disciple of the late Ustad Allaadin Khan of Maihar gave a sitar recital. He started with Suddha Kalyan, an evening raga, the Karnataka counterpart being Mohana Kalyani. The elaborate delineation of the raga was full of raga bhava. After jod and jhala, he started gat in vilambit and drut. Saranappa Guttargi on Tabla played interesting kayadas and complemented the main artiste.

Gopinath later played a dhun in

Desh, and the Sringeri in this raga was portrayed in all its hues followed by another dhun in Kapi. He ended the concert with alaap in Bhairavi, followed by a Dhun. His ability to produce five to six notes for a single meend was remarkable, showing dexterity even in the higher octave.

The three - day festival provided a feast of good sitar and veena recitals.

*Neeraja Achuta Rao
Mysore*

Statement about ownership and other particulars about PHOENIX required to be published under Rule 8 of the Registration of Newspapers (Central) Rule, 1958

FORM IV

1. *Place of Publication*
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009

2. *Periodicity of Publication*
Weekly

3. *Printers Name & Address*
N. Janardhan - Indian
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar,
Bangalore 560009

4. *Publisher's Name & Address*
N. Janardhan-Indian
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar,
Bangalore 560009

5. *Editors Name & Address*
S.N.Chandrasekhar. Indian
67 Basappa Layout, Bangalore 18

Bangalore K Venkatram. Indian
183, 8th Cr, II Bl, Jayanagar
Bangalore 11

Dr M. Suryaprasad. Indian
8, II Cr, Balepet, Bangalore 53

6. *Name and address of individuals who own the newspaper*
N. Janardhan - Indian
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar,
Bangalore 560009

I, N. Janardhan, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

(S/D) N. Janardhan
March 1, 96

Calling AIR



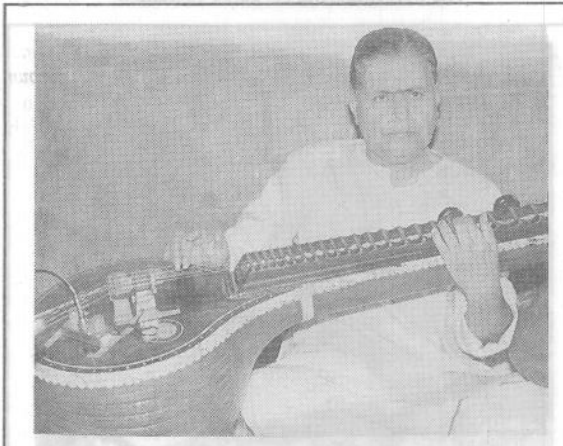
Chitti Babu

Akashavani's national programme of music (February 17) when it thoughtfully cancelled its listed programme to play an old recording of Chitti Babu's veena recital is further proof of its commitment to music. While the media as also music sabhas in general had almost ignored the maestro's passing away on February 9, the AIR paid its homage by the best way open to it.

Actually, around that very date a couple of music festivals were on, including a major conference of musicians. But no reference was made to that child prodigy who had started giving full fledged concerts from the age of 12. He was one of the most popular instrumentalists of his generation.

There have been few vainikas whose creative

ideas blazed so resplendently, though much to the chagrin of some purists. But he had made a mark, winning admirers all over. The tonality of the veena as he played revealed a potential to make the rendition as evocative as in a vocal, just as some unforgettable instrumentalists like T.R.Mahalingam (flute), Rajaratnam Pillai (nagaswaram), A.K.C. Natarajan (calrionet), to name only a



R.K. Srinivasamurthy

few had done and N. Ravikiran (gotuvadyam), U. Srinivas (mandolin) and Kadri Gopalnath (saxophone) are doing.

Chitti Babu's technical improvisation synchronised so beautifully with his 'manodharma' that his notes easily appropriated with the words. Hence his concerts were aesthetic delights despite some idiosyncrasies that characterise geniuses. But they had not stopped him from winning all the coveted distinctions in the field of music. Besides the Sangeet-Natak Akademi award, he was the State artiste of Tamil Nadu (1981-87), Ashtnana Vidwan of both the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham and the Tirupati Devoswom. The Mylapore Fine Arts had conferred on him the title "Sangita Kala Nipuna". He had also made a name as a good 'guru', having attracted students from beyond the confines of his habitat.

The recital itself was sprightly, marked for Chitti Babu's controlled spontaneity and technical assurance. Whether it was the initial Enta Nerchina (Saveri) or Durmargachara (Ranjini), his wide-ranging interpretative power was unmistakable.

Charukeshi, the main raga in the concert, was accented and stylistically sensitive, the instrumental timbre light and weighty to suit the modal or lyrical demands. The delineation was seasoned with a rich variety of 'nirvals' and 'swara' passages. His artistic discernment was further embellished in the fringe melodies like Thillang, Sindhu-Bhairavi and Brindavani.

The recording deserves to be preserved in the national archives.

That was the only noteworthy feature for this column for the period as the World Cup Cricket series compounded the discomfi-

ture inflicted by the persisting load sheddings of the KEB. But the veena recital of R.K.Srinivasamurthy (March 3, 9:30 a.m.) was as refreshing as ever. His alap for Shanmukhapriya was noted for its verve, while the celebrated Dikshitar kriti Siddhivinayakam was moulded into an essay of aesthetic finesse.

Rukmini Pushpavanam's vocal next day (9:30 a.m) was as felicitous in the rendition of Ritigoula (Paripalaya) and Kambodi (Ratnakanchuka). It is by no means a very melodious voice, but Rukmini's modulation and the relish with which she intonates the numbers make for pleasant listening. It is here that Hema Ranganathan (March 5, 9:30 am) has a lesson. Her Athana (Sakalagraha) gave her a good start. But neither the alap nor the majestic kriti Ninnuvina (Purvikalyani) could sustain the same tempo. A little more attention to 'sruti' could be of help.

It is here that the recital of veteran R.K.Srikantan scored. His recent set back in health does not seem to have had any dent on his vocal chords. The alap for Panthavarali itself had an arresting quality, unhurried grace and tempered modulation enriching the delineation. Senapate, a composition of Swati Tirunal is not generally heard in concerts, and its rendition revealed its lyrical grandeur. His ease in the bass came to the fore in Hrikathashravana (Ritigoula).

Hamsini Nagendra has a honed voice that aligns well with sruti, as evidenced in Kambodi (same day at 9:30 a.m). Her feel for the line in Sri Raghukula added lilt to her singing. The devaranama in Dwijawanti was equally touching.

What a cultured concert the one by Rudrapatnam Brothers R.N. Thyagarajan and



Hamsini Nagendra

R.N. Taranathan turned out to be (Jan 10, 9:30 p.m). Their chiselled style surfaced in the very first number Nenarunchi in Simhavahini, the rare Tyagaiah kriti Sri Manini in Purnashadja that followed redolent with lyrical charm. The studied way Kalyani was exfoliated was inspiring, as evidenced in the evocation of M. Nagaraj's violin turns. The celebrated kriti Etavunara was rendered with as much relish, accounting for wholesomeness.

As absorbing was the Charukeshi number (Hindustani sitar) of Shubendra Rao (Jan.11, 8:30 am). His deft fingering revealed sustained



Rajalakshmi Tirunarayan

'sadhana', some attractive phraseology in the different stages vouching for depth and fertile imagination. A re recording a little later (9:30 a.m) the same day of the same raga in a Lalgudi Jayaraman violin solo (Adamodigalade) was an interesting study in contrast. The tonal flourishes in his playing were effulgent, the lilting endearments familiarised through his fascinating Pada Varnam "Innum enmanam" lending a nostalgic aura to the majestic melody.

G.Rajnarayan's flute recital next morning was memorable for more than one reason. His Dhenuka (Teliyaleru) found as effulgent a response in Seshagiri Rao's violin turns. Begade (Shankari Shankuru) was as profound in its structural quality. An impactful concert. The successful run was maintained in tact by M.K. Jayashree Prasad (Veena) the next morning. Her airing of Mayamalavagoula (Deva Deva) revealed a refined style, a combination of melodic sensitivity and technical virtuosity, almost taking one back to the days when she dueted with her sister M.K. Saraswathi, consistently resulting in a rhapsody.

The major slot at 10:10 a.m. on the following Sunday failed to stir emotions; It was below par to say the least. Usha Ramamurthy's selections like Chakravaka and Bilahari were reassuring. But their rendition was

pedestrian, the main raga Simhendramadhyama (Rama Rama) straying in sruti once too often. It is that fidelity in sruti that raised the concert of R.N. Srilata (Jan 19, 8:30 a.m) to classic heights. The alap for Ritigoula itself was redolent with sprightly gamakas, the lyrical grandeur of the kriti Bale Balendu heightening the sensitive overtones of the melody.

Rajalakshmi Tirunarayan

yanan is a veena artiste known for consistency which often makes one wonder why she has not received due recognition. Though confined only to the radio, her music is deep and sincere, raga elaborations unmistakably supporting the compositions that follow. Her Athana (Anupama-gunam), and Vachaspathi (Kantachudu) were cases in point. It was soulful music, sustaining a lingering impact.



Shanti Rao

G.Usha's vocal (23 Jan, 8:30 a.m.) could not rise above the pales of mediocrity. Her brief also for Abhogi was on a low key, though the popular kriti Sabhapatiki was pleasurable. But M.K. Pranesh in his flute recital (Jan 24, 8:30 a.m.) showed promise. His Malayamaruta number was not only tuneful, but defined the contours with conviction. Kalyani for which he intoned a 'devaranama' was equally within the bounds of resonance.

Usha Kesari has a honed voice, but her music can hardly vouch for hard work. Neither her Hamsanada piece nor the alap for Ritigoula (Jan 24, 9:30 a.m.) could do justice to her form, though the kriti Nannuvidachi was no short of 'bhava', the only redeeming factor in the rendition. D.N. Gurudatt's vocal (Jan.24, 9:30 p.m.) was not better, a shaky sruti coming in the way of such select pieces like Brocheva (Sriranjini) and Gnanamosagarada (Purvikalyani) blossoming. But the Hindustani vocal by K.V. Nanadakumar (Jan.25, 8:30 a.m.) was better served in this aspect. Hence his Bilaskhani Thodi revealed striving for instant likeability, creating a variety of musical structures. It was a good effort by one who is evolving as a good vocalist.

The veena recital by Shanti Rao (Jan 25, 9:30 a.m.) had an unmistakable verve and tempo. If her

Nannubrova (Abhogi) was sombre with sonorous 'sangatis', she fused Begade (Shankari Neeve) with an array of familiar phrasings to enrich its melodic tapestry. Her playing was steady, without being exciting. But Ranganayaki Rajan's vocal (Jan 27, 9:30 a.m.) fell short in expectation, obviously out of touch. The alap for Kalyani was no doubt on familiar ground, but the stately kriti Biranavara strayed away from 'swarasthana' once too often to be ignored. The line at "Neepadamu" especially had disastrous effects due to frequent slips.

B.S. Vijayaraghavan's recital (Jan.29, 8:30a.m.) offered surges of optimism. The alap for Bilahari (Ekadantam) was arresting for its tonality and helped the ambience for an evocative Suruti (Angarakama-shrayami). The variations in the 'sangatis' within the text and the enunciation itself made for pleasant listening. As engrossing was V.K.Raman's flute recital (Jan.31, 8:30 a.m.). Whether it was a sensitive kriti like Terateeyaga Raada (Goulipantu) or the alap for Bushavali, the musical flow was graceful, helping the identification of more than one aspect of instrumental music. There was something at once primal and cerebral in Raman's artistry.

The start for February was, alas, not as auspicious. Though B.R.

Vijayalakshmi's choice of Vasantha (Maamava) was ideal, to be followed by Keeravani (Varamula), her 'sruti' remained faulty right through to render all her efforts futile. It was unequivocal, to say the least. It is that fidelity in Sruti that stood in good stead of Suma Sudheendra's veena recital (Feb. 3, 8:30 a.m.). Her enunciation of both Shanmukhapriya and Hindola was felicitous, her aesthetic impulses finding lucid expression through glowing phrases.

But a kind of rude authority in style virtually reduced M.T. Selvanarayana's essay for the National Programme (Feb 3) to naught. It was a handsome opportunity frittered away entirely due to negligence. Shelva no doubt, is endowed with a musical voice and his mentors are all veterans. He lives in an ideal ambience - staff artiste with the AIR for over two decades. But he has not put that background to good use. Instead it has made him complacent and his singing on that fateful day betrayed him to the hilt.

It was an excellent selection and anyone in the right frame of mind could make a meat of it. The familiar Sharanu Siddivinayaka (Sourashtra) itself found Shelva nervous. But it was not out of tune. Thereafter, it was a wash out, alaps and kritis straying away from the track right through. As in Devibrova (Chintamani) and the alap for Mohana (Pahimam Parameshari) there was form and the 'Pathanthara' was unmistakable. But the rendition itself could hardly vouch for any serious application. Kharaharapriya (Smanamevaru) was better honed, but certainly not free from slips, slips that could not be forgiven even in a fledgling.

ESSENCE

Shivayogi's Services to Music Recalled



At the inauguration of the 26th Music Conference. (LtoR) M.V. Subramanya, Chidananda Murthy, Nijaguna Shivayogi, N. Chokkamma, Y.K. Muddu Krishna, V. Doreswamy Iyengar and A. Veerabhadriah.

The 26th Music Conference of Karnataka Gana Kala Parishat and the Bicentenary of Sri Sarpabhusana Shivayogi was inaugurated by Nijaguna Shivayogi on February 14, 96 at the Bangalore Gayana Samaja.

In his inaugural address, Nijaguna Shivayogi recalled the services of Sarpabhusana Shivayogi and his contributions to music.

Veteran music, dance and art critic, B.V.K. Sastry, who traced the steps trodded by the Parishat for the past 25 years, also spoke on the important points to be discussed during the academic sessions.

Y. K. Muddukrishna, Director, Department of Kannada and Culture, praised the work of the Parishat in the field of music and felt that the Government has done nothing more than its duty in supporting the event.

Earlier, the programme commenced with a nagaswaram recital

by Ramadasappa, accompanied by Venkatesh, R. Rajakumar and Mani (Tavil). The invocation was sung by P. Rama.

A. Veerabhadriah, President of the Parishat, welcomed the gathering and dignitaries followed by a report on the Parishat by its secretary, Mysore V Subramanya.

Proclamation of the conference president was made by B.V.K. Sastry which was duly seconded by Bangalore K Venkatram.

Veena maestro, V. Doreswamy Iyengar, chairperson of the experts' council, emphasised the importance of academic sessions.

Academic Sessions

B.C. Veerappa, a lecturer in Kamada spoke on the life and compositions of Sarpabhusana Shivayogi. B.S. Vijayaraghavan of Mysore sang some compositions by Shivayogi supported by S.V. Anant

(violin) and Narasimha Swamy (mridanga).

T.S. Sathyavathy, in her demonstration on ragamalika compositions, explained its peculiarities, illustrating with a composition of Muthuswamy Dikshitar. She also spoke on Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer's 72 mela ragamalika and made important reference to the ragamalika composition of Ramaswamy Dikshitar.

Sarvamangala Shankar, in her lecture said that the swaravachanas could be seen in the three Kaivalya works. She sang swaravachanas of Nijaguna Shivayogi supported by Basavanagudi Nataraj (violin) and R. Sathyakumar (mridanga).

K. Sadgurucharan of Vijayawada demonstrated the complex Panchamukhi Pallavi and traced its origin.

V. Doreswamy Iyengar highlighted the characteristics of Arabhi and Devagandhari. He illustrated the Significance of rishabha and dhaivata of Devagandhari.

In the symposium, "Women as Performers and their problems", Shakuntala Narasimhan and Neela Ramgopal participated.

M.S. Sheela spoke on the "Career Opportunities in Music" which was followed by a talk on "Woman and Music", by R.R. Keshavanurthy, M.A. Seetha, N.S. Krishnamurthy and Vimala Rangachar. L.G. Sumitra was the chairperson and B.V.K. Sastry delivered the keynote address.

Concerts

Concerts in the evenings commenced with the president of the conference, veteran veena player, N. Chokkama of Mysore giving a veena recital supported by M.S. Subramanyam (violin) M. S. Ramiah (mridanga) and K.N. Krishna Murthy (ghata).

Vocalist, Panthalu Rama was supported by H.K. Narasimhamurthy

(violin). P.G. Lakshminarayan (mridanga) and B.S. Purushottam (kanjara). Her panchanadaipallavi set to Shankarabharana was elaborate.

Nagavalli Nagaraj's concert was pleasing and she was supported by Lalgudi Rajalakshmi (violin), Anoor Dattathraya Sharma (mridanga) and T.N. Ramesh (ghata). Her pallavi in dual raga Nalinakanti and Hemavathi was scholarly.

A raga, tana and pallavi in Roopaka tala was the major item in R.K. Suryanarayana's veena concert. He was ably supported by B.K. Chandramouli (mridanga) and Sukanya Ramagopal (ghata).

It was a welcome change to have a sugama sangeetha recital in this conference. Noted singers who regaled the audience were Y.K. Muddukrishna, Ratnamala Prakash, Malathi Sharma, Raju Ananthaswamy and Anitha Ananthaswamy. They were supported by B.V. Srinivas (key board), N.S. Prasad (mandolin), N.S. Muralidhar (flute), S. Bali, Kashyap and Srinivasa Prasad (percussion and other effects).

The saxophone maestro, Kadri Gopalnath was supported by Kanya Kumari (violin), M.T. Rajakesari (mridanga), Sukanya Ramagopal (ghata) and B. Rajashekar (morsing).

Vocalist, R.S. Ramakanth was accompanied by K. Sadgurucharan (mridanga), and B.R. Ravikumar (ghata). N. Ravikiran played the Chitra Veena pleasingly to the accompaniments of Nalina Mohan (violin), V.S. Rajagopal (mridanga) and Bangalore K Venkatram (ghata).

Hindusthani had its share in this conference too, with a vocal concert by Shakuntala Narasimhan. She was accompanied by Vyasamurthy Katti (harmonium) and H.S. Gopinath (tabla).

The curtains of the conference came down with a recital by Sri Vidyabhushana Teertha Swamiji sup-



N. Chokkamma with M.S. Subramanyam (violin), M.S. Ramiah (mridangam) and K.N. Krishna Murthy (ghatam).



Sugama Sangeetha Recital

ported by B.U. Ganesh Prasad (violin), M.R. Sainath (mridanga) and M.A. Krishnamurthy (ghata).

In the Vidwat Sadas held on the morning of February 18, the title, "Gana Kala Bhushana" was conferred on N. Chokkamma by Sri Vidyabhushana Teertha Swamiji of Sri Subramanya Math, Kukke. A.R. Chandrasaha Gupta, Secretary, Department of Kannada and Culture presided. Om Prakash Chourasia of Madhya Pradesh delivered the valedictory address.

Later prominent artistes, T. Nagamma (vocal), Chintalapalli Krishnamurthy (vocal), B.D. Venugopal (jaltarang), Nagabhushanachar (mridanga), B.P. Rajamma (harikatha), and Vimala Rangachar (patron) were felicitated by A.R. Chandrasaha Gupta.

Mysore V. Subramanya, the secretary of Karnataka Gana Kala Parishath who conducted the programmes with clock work precision and with a professional touch spoke on the deliberation of the conference and proposed a vote of thanks.

N. Sundarraj

USA Tour

Noted vocalist of Bangalore, M.S. Sheela is proceeding to USA on invitation on a concert tour of 80 days. She is accompanied by Nalina Mohan (violin), Anoor Ananthakrishna Sharma (mridangam) and Sukanya Ramgopal (ghatam).

The Little Nattuvanar



Lakshmi

Only a couple of years ago, she was a stripling as care free as any other girl in an elementary school. And that is precisely what little Lakshmi was in 1994. She had just celebrated her 10th birthday by then.

But being the daughter of Padmini Ravi, a distinguished dancer who is as popular a dance teacher in her Pradhan Dance Centre, Malleswaram, watching the proceedings in the daily classes was part of the daily routine for Lakshmi. Few who had seen her frisking around at the time would have imagined that the art would have meant anything serious.

However, experience had taught Padmini, as it should have done to many a compeer of hers that it is easier to wangle dancing opportunities than to find a Nattuvanar loyal to her. During the 15 years of the dance school she would have trained at least

half that number of her students in Nattuvangam too. Much to her chagrin, most of them have carved a career for themselves, their own commitments allowing them little time to meet their guru's demands.

Naturally frustrated, Padmini perforce started looking for a solution. One immediate way out was to test the aptitude of Lakshmi. Lo! much to her surprise and relief, she discovered an uncanny sense of laya in her. Added to it was Lakshmi's familiarity with the diverse 'sholkattus'. Why, she could recite some of the 'jathis' at the mention of the first syllable. Lakshmi had arrived, all that needed was a little seriousness that could be ensured

with some effort of both the taught and the teacher.

Soon it became a pleasant sight to see the little girl occupying the prominent position in the wings when her mother was dancing. It was incredible, but true. She was wielding the cymbals as though she had been doing it from her birth. And her utterance of the 'jathis' articulated the cymbal sound as unfalteringly. No complex 'korvai' seemed a challenge to her and as she sits through such recitals, she displays uncanny concentration. She has indeed become an asset to Padmini in her career as a dancer.

All that she has to be wary of is to see that she does not steal the limelight from her

S.N. Chandrasekhar

Devagiri Sangeetha Sabha

Sri Devagiri Sangeetha Sabha and Sri Devagiri Venkateshwara Temple celebrated Thyagaraja and Purandhara Dasa day on January 26, 96.

Veteran Vidwan, M.A. Narasimha char was felicitated by the temple authorities on the occasion.

Shruti Cultural Forum

Shruti Cultural Forum, Yelahanka, Bangalore North, celebrated its first anniversary on February 15 and 16, 96.

A.R. Chandrasaha Gupta, Secretary, Department of Kannada and Culture, Government of Karnataka, who was the chief guest, released the souvenir. D.P. Char, president of Shruti pleaded for encouragement from the Government.

In his inaugural address, Gupta lauded the efforts by Shruti in promoting the cultural heritage and bringing the music and dance to this extension. S.Nagaraj, secretary said that Shruti is conducting a programme every month.

This was followed by a vocal concert by M.S. Sheela, supported by M.S. Govindaswamy (violin), Arjun Kumar (mridangam) and M.A. Krishnamurthy (ghatam).

Next day saw T.V. Shankaranarayan (vocal), accompanied by Manjunath (violin) and Praveen (mridangam).

A four-day music and dance festival was organised at Shimoga from January 18 to 21, under the auspices of B. Doreswamy Iyengar Trust.

In the inaugural concert Rajkumar Bharati commenced with 'Sathatha Gananatha Siddhiyanova' in Mohana, followed by 'Endaro Mahanu bhavali' in Shri and 'Varava Kodu Vagdevi', a Kanakadasa krithi in Ranjini.

'Paalinchu Kaamakshi', of Shama Sastri, in Madhyamavathi was appreciated. He concluded the concert with Purandara Dasa's 'Daasa Daasara Maneya'. He was ably supported by Mysore Dayakar on violin, B.R.Sridhar on mrudangam and Sivaramakrishnan on ghatam.

Next day saw a pleasing dance performance by A.R.Sridhar of Bangalore. He was joined by Soundarya adding a touch of glamour to the programme. His guru Narmada assisted him on Nattuvangam and Srivatsa gave vocal support.

Impressive items were 'Vakratundam Mahakaya' in Naata followed by 'Adagala Thaaramma' of Purandara Daasa in Yeman Kalyani. He concluded with "Gummana Karayadire".

On Saturday, Sudha Raghunathan gave a neat and impressive vocal recital assisted by Vittal Ramamurthy on violin and Neyveli Ramamurthy on mrudangam. She commenced with a Varna in Bhairavi followed by 'Maha Ganapathim bhaje' in Atana of Sri Jayachamaraya Wadiyar. Thyagaraja's 'Shobillu Saptha Swara' in Jaganmohini and "Saadinchare" in Aarabhi were a treat. "Anandamrutha Varshini", of Muthuswamy Dikshithar was elaborated. "Pogadirelo Ranga" in Shankarabharana, "Srivalli Devasenapathe" in Nata Bhairavi (Papanasam Sivan) and Jayadeva Asthapadi added spice to the programme.



(Lto R) Venkataramana Sastry, M. Balamurali Krishna and M. Bharadwaj

Shimoga Fetes Balamurali

On the last day, renowned musician, M. Balamurali Krishna was felicitated. The felicitation programme commenced with a Bharatanatyam recital by Priya, daughter of Saraswathi Sundaresan of Vipanchi.

Invocation was rendered by Uma and Suma.

M. Bharadwaj, managing trustee of B. Doreswamy Iyengar Trust welcomed the invitees and dignitaries and gave a brief account of the activities of the trust.

In his felicitation address, B.V.K. Sastri, a noted music critic gave a background of Balamurali Krishna. Another music critic, C.P. Chikkanna gave an account of the work done by Balamurali Krishna, as the secretary of 'Thiruvayyar Aradhana Mahotsava'.

Finally, T. Venkataramana Sastry, chairman of the local Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, honoured Balamurali Krishna amidst Vedaghosha, Nagaswara Vaadana and flowers showering on him. A Shawl, a garland, a sandal wood casket and a citation were present to him.

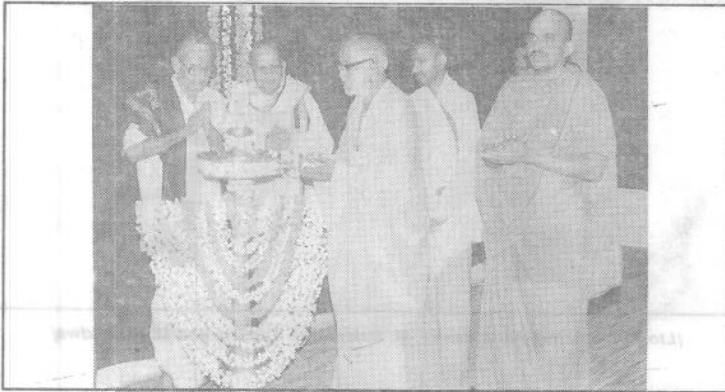
In his reply, Balamurali Krishna who thanked the organisers for honouring him, recollected his first concert in 1942 in Bangalore. He mentioned that he had given more than 20,000 concerts.

Y.K. Srikantiah, leading local music composer was honoured by Balamurali Krishna.

—M. Bharadwaj

Purandarotsava

M. Suryaprasad



Vibhudesha Theertha Swamiji inaugurating the Purandarotsava

'Purandarotsava and Prathama Sangeetha Sammelana', a three-day music conference, organised by the Govinda Gana Sabha, at Sri Kukke Subramanya was inaugurated by Sri Vibhushana Sripadaru of Sri Adamaru Math on January 20, 96. Sri Balagaru Swamiji released the souvenir brought out on the occasion and scholar, S.K. Ramachandra Rao rendered the key note address.

Venugopalacharya, who presided over the meet was conferred with the title, 'Sangeetha Saraswathi' by Sri Pejavar Swamiji and Keshavananda Bharathi Swamiji of Sri Edneer mutt felicitated eminent artistes, Thitte Krishna Iyengar, R.R. Keshavamurthy, B.V. Narayana Itala, Gopalakrishna Iyer, T.K. Venugopala Das and Babu Rai.

After the inauguration, M. Rajagopalacharya sang devaranamas of Purandaradasa, 'Aadidano Ranga' in Suruti. M. Venkatesh Kumar sang with vibrant taans and boltans ably accompanied by Mownesh Kumar and Shashikanth Kulkarni on Harmonium and tabla respectively.

Rudrapatnam brothers, R.N. Taranathan and R.N. Thyagarajan, rendered music with right notes evok-

ing emotional response. They rendered Purandaradasa compositions and embellished them with Carnatic decorations. 'Satata Gananatha' (Mohana), 'Ninna nodi dhanyanadhe' (Kamavardhini), 'Neene Dayalu' (Anandabhairavi), 'Pogadiralo Ranga' (Shankarabharana) with alapana, niraval and swaras, 'Dangurava sarirayya' (Kamboji) and a ugabhoga in ragamalika were sung superbly. Kanchana Subbarathnam (violin), V. Praveen (mridangam) and A.S. Narasimhaswamy (kanjira) gave good support.

M.S. Sheela's vocal concert was delightful with 'Vandisuvu daadiyali' (Nata), 'Tunge mangala tarange' (Abhogi), 'Kodu bega divyamathi' (Vachaspathi), 'Katha- shravana maado' (Reetigowla), 'Manavajanna doddadu' (Poorvikalyani) and 'Kallu sakkare kolliro' (Kalyani). Nalina Mohan on violin, A.V. Anand on mridangam and Sukanya Ramgopal on ghatam gave a dependable rhythmic anchor.

Anupama Bhat gave a good account of herself in the delineation of Kharaharapriya (Rama neesamana-mevaru).

Vasudha of Mysore demonstrated

her prowess in her alignment with shruti and rich manodharma. Her Nata, Shuddha Dhanyasi, Athana, 'Neene ballidano Hari' and Bhairavi were executed with intelligent attention to detail. Raghuram, T.N. Ramesh and K.S.N. Swamy on violin, mridangam and khanjira respectively gave lively support.

Bidaram Krishnappa Remembered

Revered musician of Mysore, Bidaram Krishnappa was remembered during the Purandara Sangeethotsava and First Music Conference held at the Kukke Subramanya Mutt.

Bidaram Krishnappa did pioneering work in the propagation of Carnatic music in Mysore. His prominent disciples, veteran vocalist Thitte Krishna Iyengar and noted violinist R.R. Keshava murthy spoke on the personality, life and contribution of Krishnappa. Bidaram Krishnappa Rama Mandira at Mysore built by him stands as a monumental testimony of his contribution.

Thitte Krishna Iyengar sang one of the Dashavathara krithis of Krishnappa set to Poorvi Kalyani. His rendition of 'Ee sadanam moksha' with chittai swaras was enthralling. The Rishabhapriya was captured in his untiring presentation for 'Vachchitira ninne kori Dasharathi'.

Keshavamurthy spoke of Krishnappa's methods of teaching and presented two krithis of Krishnappa in Dharmavathi (Amba brovave) and Gamenashrama (Parvateesha maam paahi), accompanied by his wife, Krishnaveni on second violin and Narasimhaswamy on mridangam.

This was followed by a concert of Hyderabad brothers, R. Seshachari and R. Raghavachari accompanied by Mysore M Manjunath on violin, T.A.S. Mani of mridangam and M.A. Krishnamurthy on ghata.



Music Academy secretary Parthasarathy giving away Natyanjali Trust's Title to Padmini Rao.

Another Distinction for PADMINI RAO

Despite all its intrigues, an honour for a Karnataka artiste in Tamilnadu (Madras to be more precise) or vice-versa has its own significance, if not prestige. It is like winning in an India-Pakistan cricket match!

For Padmini Rao, the foremost disciple of Tanjore Kittappa Pillai and founder-director of the Ponniah Lalitkala Academy, Bangalore, winning such an honour is nothing new. Not long ago, when her disciple Vani Krishnaswamy was adjudged the "Best Dancer of the Year" by the Music Academy there, Padmini automatically walked away with the "Best Guru" distinction. That was only the second combination from the State to have won such a recognition, the first being Lakshmi Gopaldaswamy and

Narmada, also a Kittappa student.

This time on (January 18, 1996) Padmini who in her time was a vivacious dancer and has since confined herself to the chores of a Guru, was conferred with the coveted title "Naty Kala Saraswati". The title is instituted by Natyanjali Trust of Jayalakshmi Satagopan and the related 'birudu patra' was given away to Padmini by T.S. Parthasarathy, a Fellow of the Central Sangeet-Natak Akademi. It was a simple, but impressive function attended by a number of parents of Padmini's students and a sizeable number of local dignitaries in the realm of fine arts.

Padmini's prestigious choreographic pieces "Ashtalakshmi" and Sharabhoji Maharaja's masterpiece "Sharabhendra Bhupala Kuravanji"

presented by her students on the occasion, were well received by the fairly large audience, Parthasarathy himself describing them as "aesthetic delight".

S.N. Chandrasekhar

Memorable Jugalabandi

Tarangini, Bangalore, presented a jugalbandi recital featuring Suma Sudhindra on veena and Ustad Shahid Parvez on sitar. Structurally and tonally sitar has an edge over veena. The inbuilt qualities of sitar lends it for a vibrant exposition. Suma and Sahid played with perfect understanding. V.S. Rajagopal on mridangam lent a formidable rhythmic support and Ravindra Yavgal on tabla was equally good. Their tani avarthana was short and sweet.

Obituary

Chittibabu Passes Away

Eminent veena maestro C. Chittibabu died on February 10, due to heart attack at Madras. He was 59.

Born in Kakinada, Chittibabu learnt veena at the age of five and gave his first concert when was 12 and gained recognition as a child prodigy.

Chittibabu was the disciple of late Emani Shankara Sastry. Suma Sudhindra and Shanti Rao of Bangalore are some of his prominent disciples.

He leaves behind his wife and three sons and hordes of admirers to mourn his loss.

Phoenix conveys its condolences to the bereaved family members.

Impressive Start for "Sankranthi"

"Shankranti", the musical programme that launched the Vidwan R.K.Srikantan Musical Trust, could not have banked on a more impressive concert than the one provided by Thitte Krishna Iyengar of Mysore. The nonagenarian vocalist only recently in the academic sessions of the Music Academy in Madras had captivated the scholars by his masterly vocalisation of choice melodies. They couldn't believe that one in that advanced age could be so precise in the finer points of the art.

His inaugural concert for the newly-formed Trust at the Adarsha Bhavan was as reassuring and impactful. It left few in doubt about the veteran's fecundity.

Krishna Iyengar's alap for Kalyani itself was robust, meandering on the salient 'sancharas' with effortless ease. "Devi Meenakshamudam", an old-time favourite in Mysore was rendered with due emphasis on the lyrical aspect. The sleek 'niraval' at "Pavana Madhuranilaye", embellished with cascading 'swara' passages enriched the aesthetic overtones.

It was thoughtful on the part of the organisers of the two-day (January 15 and 16, 1996) festival, viz, R.S. Ramakanth, M.S. Sheela, Suma Sudheendra and T.S. Satyavati, all students of Srikantan, to honour some of his contemporaries like Thitte Krishna Iyengar, R.R. Keshavamurthy, T.S. Tatachar and M.S. Ramaiah. It was however, a pity that an indisposition should have denied the well-intentional Srikantan the privilege of himself honouring such a galaxy of artistes. In his absence, A.R. Chandrasahas Gupta, Secretary of the Department of Kannada and Cul-

ture, discharged that pleasant responsibility as elegantly.

A scholarly treatise by Prof.S.K. Ramachandra Rao on "Sampradaya Sangeeta", delivered on the occasion formed part of the colourful function. The talk in book form was also released at the function, a practice which will be followed every year.

Promoting young talent being one of the objectives of the Trust, a concert each by T.R.Srinath of Mysore on flute and Neela Ramgopal (vocal) were featured in the concluding day's programme.

S.N.Chandrasekhar

V.Kalavathi

Venkatram Kalavathi of Bangalore hails from a family of musicians. Her father, Bangalore K Venkatram is a renowned ghatam artiste and mother, G.R. Jaya is an accomplished vocalist. Her brother, Krishna is a mridan-gam and kanjira player.

Kalavathi had basic tutelage from her mother and Ushachar. She had advance training from late Anoor S Ramakrishna under the Government of India scholarship. Kalavathi acquired excellent knowledge and technique in executing good musical package in her concerts from her father Bangalore K Venkatram. She has established as leading vocalist of her age group.

Kalavathi has performed at the Percussive Arts Centre, Sri Krishna



V.Kalavathi

Sangeetha Sabha, Vijaya College of Music and also in other prestigious cultural organisations of Bangalore and other cities in Karnataka. She has also performed at Krishna Gana Sabha, Madras in 1994 and won the Best Singer Award of the sabha. Her performance at Indian Fine Arts Society, Madras in 1994 was appreciated by the audience.

She is the recipient of awards from Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer and Lalgudi Jayaraman.

Kalavathi completed MA (Music) in 1992 with a first rank. She is a B high grade artiste in classical and light classical music of AIR. She has lent her voice to film music directed by M. Balamuralikrishna produced by G.V. Iyer. She has recorded two audio cassettes, Prathibha and Vasudeva Keerthana Manjari.

Besides music, her involvement in the Youth Forum of the Percussive Arts Centre is very deep. She teaches vocal music in the Ayyanar College of Music in Bangalore.

A.P. Rao

V. Kalavathi
183, 8th Cr, II Block, Jayanagar
Bangalore 560011 © 663 0079

LAKSHMI JEWELLERY COMPANY

Manufacturing Jewellers for over 55 years

Dealers in:

Precious and Semi Precious Stones

Manufacturers of:

Shields, Trophies, Lapel Badges and Medals

LAKSHMI JEWELLERY COMPANY

NAGARTHPET, BANGALORE 560002

© 2212635 Estd 1940

LAKSHMI JEWELLERY COMPANY

Manufacturing Jewellers for over 55 years

Dealers in:

Precious and Semi Precious Stones

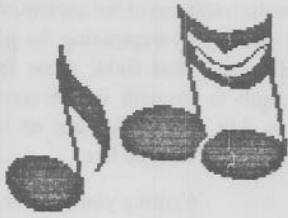
Manufacturers of:

Shields, Trophies, Lapel Badges and Medals

LAKSHMI JEWELLERY COMPANY

NAGARTHPET, BANGALORE 560002

© 2212635 Estd 1940



PHOENIX

Journal on Music and Dance

Vol 1

April 1996

No 6

S.N.Chandrasekhar

67 Basappa Layout

Bangalore 560018 ☎ 6675758

Bangalore K Venkataram

183, 8th Cross, II Bl, Jayanagar

Bangalore 560011 ☎ 6630079

Dr M. Surya Prasad

'Munikoti' 8, II Cross, Balepet

Bangalore 560053 ☎ 2253975

Editors

N.Sundarraaj

138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar

Bangalore 560009 ☎ 2263696

Managing Editor

B. Rajashekar

☎ 2216459

Advertising Manager

Representatives

Ganapathi Bhat

Hubli -Dharwar

K. Ramamurthy Rao

Mysore

Geeta Raja

9 Chhaya, Jam-e-Jamshed Road

Matunga, Bombay 400019

☎ 412 2074

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00

Three Years: Rs 140-00

Please send all remittances to

PHOENIX

The Circulation Manager

138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar

Bangalore 560009 ☎ 2263696

RN 45468/87

Cover Photo by:

Empire Studio, Bangalore

Courtesy:

Ayyanar College of Music,

Bangalore

4

Readers' Write

5

Editorial-Varnams at Will

6

Readers Write

7

Pallavis

8

Dancers' Face is their Canvas

10

Chowdiah- Another Name for Violin

12

Calling AIR

14

Here and There

15

Uncle Handel of the Ivories

16

What Nandikeshwara didn't Foresee

18

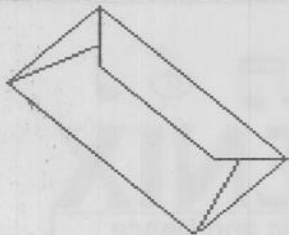
Book Review- Ksetrayya made Accessible

The sponsor of March issue is

B.S.Somnath

Shankarapuram

Bangalore 560004



Readers Write

Kudos to PHOENIX

I read with great enthusiasm your new venture on music and dance, the monthly English magazine, PHOENIX which was a much-awaited journal.

In this context, I request you to devote an article exclusively towards teaching the basics of classical Carnatic music which would go a long way in helping the beginners to understand the vast field of Carnatic Music. I would also like to see a column on forthcoming music concerts incorporated time to time in your magazine.

While congratulating you on this bold venture, I would stress that PHOENIX is a boon to lovers of music and hopefully it would grow further for the benefit of music lovers.

*C.G. Badrinath
Bangalore 560069*

II

We needed a magazine like PHOENIX very badly. My hearty congratulations to S.N.Chandrasekhar and his colleagues for this venture. A venture like this needs more financial support. I hope more and more companies, especially the corporate sector would come forward and lend the much needed support.

*M.Surendranath
Bangalore 560011*

III

As rightly mentioned by Prof S.K. Ramachandra Rao, while releasing

PHOENIX, that the music fraternity needed a magazine without gossip columns, unwanted and biased reviews. The language of PHOENIX is simple and this is what we needed.

A round up of the music programmes organised in Bangalore and Mysore may be published.

*A.R. Shanmugam
Bangalore 560006*

IV

PHOENIX, a magazine on music and dance was a necessity to musicians and dancers of our state. A list of forthcoming programmes may be published.

*K.N. Gayathri
Bangalore 560018*

V

I am surprised and delighted to receive your esteemed magazine, "PHOENIX" dealing with music and dance of our beloved country. I have gone through the first edition of the same. It is also interesting to note that the art critics, S.N.Chankrasekhar, M. Suryaprasad and N. Sundarraj, a distinguished photographer have taken up the good cause beyond their own perview so that it can help the youth to understand the intricacies of our fine arts and be sincere to know about them better.

Your attempt to publish in English, a common language known by all as the art knows no boundaries of language.

The articles are not only about music but also about our cultural items

viz dance. May your endeavor to revive the traditions of our ancient art of our country by expressing the good and bad in that field, grow from strength to strength in the coming years. Let our youth wake up now itself before it is too late.

Wishing you all success.

N.Ramiah
Vice President, the Malleswaram
Sangeetha Sabha, Bangalore 3

VI

I am extremely happy that PHOENIX- a journal on music and dance has come into being. Having gone through the issues of December and Jan-Feb 96 I have found the journal quite interesting with good presentation of events.

I wish that the journal undertakes talents research among both elders and youngsters who hardly have any access to publicity. The get up of the journal is very pleasing. Let the journal grow in stature and stay on forever to serve will.

*D.B. Harindra
Bangalore 560078*

Your journal, PHOENIX, is excellent. Every article is praiseworthy. It is a standard one and highly useful to many and many people.

*M.C. Narasa Raju
Chirala 523157*

Dear Reader

Your comments and views are most valuable to us and the others too. We shall gladly publish the best. But, for maximum impact and better coverage, make them brief. Send your comments to:

The Editor, PHOENIX
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009

Editorial

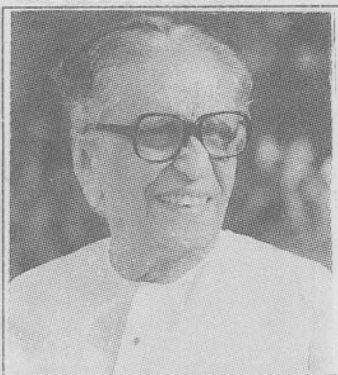
Varnams at Will?

Suddenly it has seemingly dawned on some adherents of Bharatanatyam that there are no Varnams in Kannada. Why there have been attempts in some quarters to get some Varnams made to order! It all sounds so simple that one wonders why great composers like the Tanjore Quartet and nearer, in our own century, a doyen like Dhandayudhapani Pillai spent a life-time to produce a few masterpieces. Nor can it be denied that those Varnams have still remained unequalled and served the purpose of our dancers exemplarily despite their being in languages other than Kannada. Equally inexplicable is why our best known composers did not attempt compositions in their mother tongue.

The answer to such questions should not be far to seek. All those stalwarts were aware that fine arts knew no barriers of language. They had a language of their own, a language which is one of the most potent unifying forces of our culture. Also, unlike the present times when there is hypocritical talk of emotional integration all-around, while on the other covert under-currents are constantly working against that expediency, parochialism was not known to this part of the country and there was constant inter-action among artistes. Nor had linguistic chauvinism risen its ugly head as yet and there were many who knew almost all the languages of the region.

In this connection, it is worthwhile remembering that the credit for adapting some popular Dasara Padas for dance should go to the all-time great, T. Balasaraswathi. Likewise, the repertoire of many of our own dancers, past and present, abound with padams, javalis and even varnams in Telugu and Tamil. And none the worse for it too. All this doesn't mean that there is no need for Kannada varnams. Far from that. But one certainly shouldn't get obsessed with the idea and resort to translating from other languages. That is ill-advisable for more than one reason. It will conclusively mean that Kannadigas can't stand on their own. In recent times, a few Varnams in Kannada have seen the light of the day. But they have not found favour even with the most ardent proponent of the move. Maybe they fail to fully answer the requirements. There is no doubt that composing a Varnam is more challenging than a kriti or a thillana. It calls for scholarship in the language, musical expertise and the technique of dance to produce results that would go unchallenged. That has to happen spontaneously and cannot be made to order. And it cannot be achieved overnight is a truism!


S.N. Chandrasekhar



With best compliments from:

KAIL ENGINEERS

18 Tumkur Road
Dasarahalli
BANGALORE 560057

 Works 8395201
Resi: 8396501

Manufacturers of:

Precision Machined Components

Study on Pallavis

The youth forum of the Percussive Arts Centre, Bangalore had organised a 'study circle on Pallavis' by T.R. Subramanyam (TRS) of New Delhi. The programme on March 6, 96 at the Ayyanar College of Music, was one of a series of three held in the city.

In his introductory note, TRS observed that the feeling that Pallavi is the most difficult branch of Carnatic music was a fallacy. The rasikas should learn to enjoy Pallavi singing as much as they do the krithis, he said.

The aspects that differentiate pallavis from krithi singing were the 'Aas', the spread over of the sahitya,

the Arudi or Padagarbha, the Eduppu or the take off point and the Karve or the time gap between the various sahitya aksharas, he explained.

Earlier, pallavis were mainly sung in four kalais (chowka kalai), the take off point being 3/4 eduppu ie., the eduppu after the initial three beats. There were only a few ragas that were selected for elaboration. The times have changed. "We can select the talas and ragas according to our own attainments", he added. The famous "Parimala Rangapathi" in Khamboji was adapted to Bhairavi and syllables were set in sahitya aksharas patterns. The credit for singing the pallavi in this manner should go to GNB, he

observed.

TRS explained, the three speeds of 'niraval' done in pallavi singing. He enlightened the listeners saying that it was Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar who introduced 'niraval' singing. TRS stressed that a scheme in setting up a Pallavi was very much necessary.

He later demonstrated a few Pallavis, starting with a simple structure composed of the basic syllables of a sarale varase, he sang some intricate pallavis in Khanda Eka (thrisra nade), Misra Thripata (thrishra nade), chatushra (sankeerna nade). He even demonstrated, how the sahitya spread in a pallavi embodies in itself the trikala pattern, intelligently,

He concluded by saying that pallavi singing should always be a very melodic experience. It should seem very easy as though the artiste is just playing and singing and not a tiresome experience for the performer or the listener.

V. Krishna



This issue in honour of violin maestro T. Chowdiah is sponsored by his senior disciple and Anklung vidushi H.S. Anasuya Kulkarni and Narayan Kulkarni, Bangalore.

Dancers' Face is their Canvas

Manu Vijay

Dance treatises list Aaharya as one of the Abhinayas - an instrument to communicate the art. Ashraya abhinaya includes make up, costume and jewellery of the dancer and in a broader sense, could mean, stage decor and props too.

Over the years the solo dancers' costume and make-up has changed considerably. One even hears of make-up articles, head dress and ornaments as far back as the Harappan culture as artifacts unearthed in the excavation of the Indus Valley sites. The paintings of Ajanta and Ellora, and the vibrant Chalukyan and Hoysala sculptures are further evidence of the elaborate costumes and jewellery used in those times.

As dance further moved to the temple and then the proscenium stage, costume took on a more simpler style allowing for a freedom of movement and clarity of line. Make-up is now used to highlight and etch a dancer's facial lines in order to communicate her expressions to even the last row in a large auditorium. While one does not deny the importance of make-up or costume, the men behind the scene are often ignored. While Bangalore can boast of a few professional make-up men, very little is known about them.

B.S. Padmanabha

Probably one of the most experienced among them is B.S. Padmanabh whose involvement in the field has



Make up artist B.S. Padmanabha

been for a near 40 years. Bangalore Srinivas Padmanabh was born in Bangalore in 1941 and developed interest in the art when he was eight. The son of a policeman, Padmanabh was inspired by cinema posters. Initiated into the art by D. Madhava Murthy of Gyana Jyothi Kala Mandir, a well-known drama troupe, Padmanabh's first foray into the dance field was with guru Rajalakshmi's troupe.

He then did make up for the schools of gurus Shiva Rao, Radhakrishna, U.S. Krishna Rao, Sundar Kumar, Revathi Narasimhan and Hema Govindarajan. He is proud of his work with Guru Radhakrishna's troupe for its ballets 'Vishakanya' and 'Shanthala'.

Padmanabh uses the customary pancake for make-up and mixes his own 'rouge' with white lead, China

red and face powder. He is aware of the fact that these ingredients, when used in large quantities do lead to allergies, eczema etc. His make-up includes preparing a dancer from head to toe, the hair dress, facial make-up, jewellery, 'arta' etc. He even rents out required temple jewellery, costumes, wigs for ballets etc.

His speciality, he believes, is the lines he gives to highlight a dancer's eyes and brows.

Padmanabh is well versed in stage decor and takes photographs and videos of dance. In addition, he is specially called upon to decorate Gods and Goddesses for utsavams, processions, festivals and for Ganapathy and Rama pandals. While he has no interest in make-up for TV and films, Padmanabh feels that there is a need for professional dance make-up artists to get together under a single banner to solve their problems.

Padmanabha married Dhana-lakshmi in 1972 and has a daughter.

*B.S. Padmanabha
241 Aralegudi Compound, (Opp Kasi
Egg Centre), Cottonpet Main Road,
Bangalore 560053 ☎ 661 5202*

Indranna

Indranna with seventeen years of experience in the field is another sought after professional make-up artiste. Looks are deceptive and



Indranna giving a finishing touch

Indranna's burly physique does not do justice to the delicacy of line that his make-up reveals.

Indranna, like Padmanabh, began his carrier with a drama troupe and was part of Chowdeshwari Vastra Alankara, his mentors being Shivanna and Ponnuswamy. He is now a regular with P.C. Subramanya, Padmini Ravi, Nupura, Ponniah Natya Academy, Sadhana Sangama and Kinkini schools.

Indranna is an expert in stage decor with flowers, thermocol and cloth and believes that the best decor is one that does not over shadow the dancers. Rather it should allow her to stand out. His forte is his eye make-up, the importance he gives to characterisation for dance ballets, period make up for historical dramas. He has ventured into one national award winning film. But he is not interested in pursuing the field. Indranna undertakes contracts to prepare curtains and back drops for auditoria in the city, as dance make-up alone is insufficient to make a living. Ruminating on the trend of young dancers doing their own make-up, Indranna feels that they should get it done by professional as it gives them time, a tension-free atmosphere and the touch of an expert.

S. Siddaraj

S. Siddaraj, a well known make-up artiste in the field for 20 years, began his carrier as a worker in Minervamills. A prolonged strike lead him to look for work elsewhere and he turned to Dhanpal and Sons, a drama company in his area.

He first worked on five or six black and white movie films as an assistant. Later he joined Prabhat Kalavidaru to

do make-up for their ballets and musicals. He is now mainly involved with Venkatesha Natya Mandira, Nupura, Usha Datar Bhanumathi's troupe, and occasionally for gurus Narmada and Vasantha Vedam. However the mainstay of his work are school and college day functions and factory dramas.

While Siddaraj initially mixed the make-up himself, availability of pancakes, kajal and other reliable material has relieved him of the task. He has worked with director Vasanth Kavali in 'Purandara Dasaru', a serial for the Hyderabad Doordarshan, before the Bangalore Kendra was established. Siddaraj has worked with the Bangalore Doordarshan, festival and special programmes.

Prospects in dance make-up, they feel, are bleak and the meagre earnings thereof do not attract the younger generation for the profession.

Palghat Mani Award to Guruvayur Dorai



This year's K. Puttu Rao Memorial Palghat Mani Award donated by K.K. Murthy, President, Academy of Music, Bangalore will be awarded on the valedictory day, May 31 to mridangam vidwan Guruvayur Dorai.

Veena vidwan, R. Visweshwaran will be awarded the Palani Subramanya Pillai Award, donated by Sudha Rao and A.H. Rama Rao, Ramasudha Charities on May 27.

Mridangam vidwan, M.T. Rajakesari will receive the H. Puttachar Memorial Pre-Parangath Award, donated by H.P. Ramachar.

The 15th Thalavadyotsav '96 of the Percussive Arts Centre, Bangalore will be held from May 27 to 31, 96 at Yavanika and Chowdiah Memorial Hall, Bangalore.

Extraordinary Citizen

The much decorated Carnatic Vocalist, R.K. Srikantan was conferred with another distinction on April 8, 96. At a simple but impressive function, the Rotary Club of Bangalore conferred the title "Extraordinary Citizen". Among the earlier recipients, Srikantan is the first artiste to receive the distinction.

Chowdiah: Another Name for VIOLIN

V. Doreswamy Iyengar

Chowdiah was an unforgettable, dynamic and popular violinist of his times. He was almost a daily performer and a daily traveller, providing his accompaniment in at least 20 concerts a month, without any sign of fatigue or indifference.

He, along with Palghat Mani Iyer was a big draw. There would never be a dull moment in the concerts in which he participated. He had an ingenious knack of inspiring the main musician to come out with his best.

Chowdiah has the distinction of having provided accompaniment to three generations of musicians. In those days of male chauvinism, he had the grace to accompany M.S. Subbulakshmi despite objections of some male musicians. Among those whom he accompanied most were Ariakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar, Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer, Musuri Subramanya Pillai, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, G.N.B, Madurai Mani and Alathur Brothers. It was a sight to see them on a dais along with Chowdiah and to hear the inspired music which is still green in my memory.

Very often Chowdiah would remember with gratitude that it was his guru, Bidaram Krishnappa who made him what he was. Krishnappa was bent on making Chowdiah a violinist to reckon with. Chowdiah's popularity mostly rested on his invention of the seven-stringed violin which had become a rage in those days, though shrouded in controversy. But he stuck to his guns and emerged as a most

sought after violinist of his times. The motivation and story behind this invention is very interesting.

Those were Mikeless days. Violinists were at a disadvantage when they had to accompany a vocalist with a powerful voice. Hence he was bent on finding a device to increase the volume of the violin. Besides he had a peculiar urge to do something original. Thus came the idea of adding three more strings to the violin. He had to struggle hard and had to invent new bowing and fingering techniques to tame the new violin to bring it under control.

The next problem was that of bringing it to light which he dare not do without the knowledge and approval of his guru. Chowdiah knew that Krishnappa, being a purist, would throw cold water on his experiment. He was waiting for an opportunity to bring his experiment to his notice.

One evening Krishnappa was to sing at Veena Seshanna's house and Chowdiah was to accompany him on the violin. To start with he played the four stringed variety. Towards the end, he hesitantly took out the seven stringed violin and started tuning it. This invited a fierce look from his guru who asked him why he had changed the violin which was sounding all right. Chowdiah nervously told him that he wanted to try his seven-stringed violin. Krishnappa said, "four strings are not enough for you to spoil the violin? Do you want four more strings?"

This dialogue attracted the attention of Seshanna who was curious to know how the new violin sounded.

He asked Krishnappa to give the boy a chance to show his experiment. Krishnappa was left with no option. The concert concluded with a tremendous success for Chowdiah. Seshanna also seemed pleased with the novelty. He asked Krishnappa to allow Chowdiah to play the new violin thereafter which might bring him fame and money. How true was Seshanna's prophecy!

It was my privilege to give a number of concerts in combination with him. Though he was much senior to me in every respect, he offered himself very gladly to play with me. Needless to say that this combination gave me a big boost. I think this was the first Veena-Violin combination which started in the early fifty's and went on till the end of his life. I can never forget his affection.

Chowdiah was very sensitive to artistic excellence and spontaneously responded to it. In one of the concerts of Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar in Madras, he has the accompanist. After a memorable rendering of the krithi "Evarikai" (Devamanohari), Chowdiah bowed his head to the maestro and said, "It looks as if Thyagaraja has composed this song only for you. Your rendering of it is fit for you. I pray that you keep singing like this for hundred years".

Ariakudi spontaneously replied, "yes I shall do this, provided you accompany me for as many years".

On another occasion Chowdiah was playing for T.R. Mahalingam (flute) in Bidaram Krishnappa Rama Mandiram in Mysore. Mali's Bhairavi was aesthetic. Chowdiah was so

moved that he kept down his violin and asked Mali to continue. "I don't want to disturb the divine atmosphere you have created", he said. Once Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer was singing in the Bangalore Gayana Samaja. T.N. Krishnan was on the violin. Chowdiah was present in the audience. After Semmangudi's beautiful rendering of Shankarabharana, it was Krishnan's turn. Chowdiah said to Krishnan, "Don't be in a hurry. I expect a good Shankarabharanam from you. Give us a leisurely Alapana".

Krishnan felt encouraged and, of course, rose to his expectation. A large-hearted man that he was, Chowdiah used to say that the younger generation of violinists were not only doing very well but were developing the art further.

Chowdiah's obsession with his car was proverbial. He thought no end of his Baby Austin which often landed him in trouble. He made most of his journeys by this self-driven car.

The Maharaja Krishnaraja Wadiyar, who had observed his adventurous journeys, once sent for him and asked why not go in for a better car. It was an indirect hint to Chowdiah to ask the Maharaja for a good car. But Chowdiah couldn't take the hint. He boasted of his car and the good service it was giving him.

Days after this meeting, a close official of the Maharaja told him how he had missed a golden opportunity of getting a decent car from the Maharaja. It was then that he realised how his pride had let him down!

It is surprising, how in the midst of a busy schedule of professional engagements, he found time for his disciples among whom may be mentioned the names of R.K. Venkatarama Sastry, V. Sethuramiah, C.R. Mani, Alagiri Swamy, V. Ramanathan, K.J. Venkatachar, H.S. Anasuya, Nanjunda Swamy et al.

He composed a number of krithies and Tillanas during the last few years of his life. He would say that his ultimate desire was to die in harness, without being a nuisance to anyone. God granted his desire. He passed away on January 19, 1967 without any suffering whatsoever.

He had performed the previous

day and had accepted advance for a few performances ahead. It is very rarely that we come across a charismatic personality like him. The monumental, violin-shaped Chowdiah Memorial Hall, the only one of its kind, is there to keep his memory ever-green, thanks to K.K. Murthy, the President of the Academy of Music Bangalore. ♦

GANASUDHA

H N Rajanna



Top: N. Ramani with V.K. Raman (flute), H.K. Narasimha Murthy (violin), N.G. Ravi (mridangam) and B. Rajasekhar (morching). Bottom: V. Kalavathi with Nalina Mohan (violin), B. Dhruvaraj (mridangam) and Vyasa Vittala (kanjira)

Ganasudha Sangeetha Sabha, of Bhadravathi is striving for the promotion of music for the last 25 years.

Under the leadership of H.S. Nagaraja Rao, secretary, the sabha organised a three day festival of music at the Girls High School auditorium, Bhadravathi which was inaugurated by the flute maestro N. Ramani. N. Anantha Padmanabha Rao of Bangalore was the chief guest.

N. Ramani and his disciple V.K. Raman of AIR, Bangalore featured in the inaugural flute concert ably sup-

ported by H.K. Narasimha Murthy (violin), N.G. Ravi (mridangam) and B. Rajasekhar (Morching).

Young V. Kalavathi of Bangalore gave a pleasing vocal concert with the support of Nalina Mohan (violin) B. Dhruvaraj (mridangam) and Vyasa Vittala (Kanjira).

On the last day T.V. Ramaprasad, a young vocalist from Bangalore gave a neat attractive performance accompanied by B.U. Ganesh Prasad (violin) N.G. Ravi (mridangam) and Vyasa Vittala (kanjira)

Calling AIR

It was a propitious start for the period, the warm morning air on Feb 7 (8.30 a.m.) freshening up with the strains of a wholesome Charukeshi (Kripayapalaya). The artiste was R.K. Srinivasa Murthy, the senior vainika. If the alap had a meditative approach to arrive at a soulful picture of the raga, the kriti was euphonic in its impress, the vibrant notes deftly appropriating with the words.

It was again Charukeshi on veena on the next day (9.30 a.m.). But it was hardly half as impressive. R.K. Prakash was the artistes. But Kedara-goula (Neelakantam) changed the very complexion of the recital. It was more reposeful so as to give his Thodi (Ambanadupai) a headstart. Thodi easily offered surges of optimism. Earlier, from Madras (8.30 a.m.) Ashok Ramani who definitely figures more frequently on the city stage, fused Shankarabharana (Nannu Brova) with an array of endearing 'sancharas'. The lyrical appeal in the kriti accented its instant likeability.

Prabhudev Sardar, the recipient



Anuradha Madhusudan

of the year's State Sangeet-Nrutya Academy award, was featured in a concert at 9.30 p.m. (February 9) by Dharwad. Though he has a deep, sonorous voice, Chandra-Prabha, perhaps a raga he has coined himself, could not make an impact, a distinct imagery failing to emerge. But Usha Chippalkatti's Madhuvanti the next day (12.30 pm.) stood out for its emotional sensitivity.

What a contrast the South Zone Cultural Hook-Up (Feb 18) turned out to be! Shubhasri Murthy's Janaranjini (Smarane Sukham) itself left one wondering how she was able to make it to the distinguished slot. Nor were her Pantuvarali (Kashi Vishalakshi) and Kambodi (Ratnakanchuka) any better. Her rendition freely allowed the straying of odd swaras to rob it of any fidelity.

That is certainly not the only reason why Jaishree Prakash's veena recital next morning (9.30 a.m.) sounded refreshing. The Nata Pancharatna kriti provided an excellent start to Jaishree. It was sustained by a robust Thodi (Rajurvedala). A cascading variety of 'sancharas' enhanced the aural elegance of the lovely Thyagaiah kriti. The concluding 'devaranama' in Kanada was as appealing in its modal overtones. The melodic grace that is the forte of duets, is unmistakable in the singing of Kavitha and Triveni, popularly known as Saralaya Sisters. Marugelara (Jayantashri) gave their concert (9.30 a.m., February 2) a lovely start. Their alap for Purvikalyani flowed gracefully, meandering over all the salient 'sancharas', the kriti Gnyanamosaga itself emerging on a steady gait. It was a reassuring recital to prove that

the duo is not allowing grass to grow under their feet.

Vinayak Torvi's Hindustani vocal recital (8.30 a.m., February 22) was as refreshing. His Ahir Bhairav was highly evocative, a cascading array of taans, haunting 'sargams' and a titillating layakari heightening its structure. The Jonpuri number was as appealing for its lyrical quality - Anjikinyatakayya. For the night's slot, Vinayak gave a more detailed airing for Maru-Bhag. The familiar Sakhiya Hona (vilambit) and Sakhibina Bajay (drut) angas had a reverberating lilt in them. The enunciation in either case was remarkable for its fervour.

Rupa Sridhar's vocal (9.30 a.m. February 24) was not half as inspiring. Neither the initial Mohana-Kalyani (the unfailing Bhuvaneswariya) nor Thodi (Sarasijanabha) could rise to any significant heights. Rather, there were too many slips in their structure for her to scale above the mediocre level. But B.Raghuram's violin solo (8.30 a.m. February 29) was steady and tuneful. His Purvikalyani (Gnyanamosaga) with its sonorous 'sancharas' created a fine musical atmosphere.

That same night (10.30 p.m.) Rajeev Taranath was in his elements when he intoned Chandra Nandan on his Sarod. The brief alap itself cut the contours of the soulful raga con-

NSR



Vinayak Torvi

vincingly, while the 'gat' helped forward with a flurry of resonant 'gamaks', Rajeev's technical virtuosity making an irresistible impact on the listener.

Known for his baritone, M. Raghavendra has an impressive style as evidenced in his Sarasirahasana (Nata) on March 8, 8.30 a.m. His Thodi (Dachukova) was marked for its masterly layakari, his 'manodharma' in the 'swara prasthara' easily rising the melodic report to a crescendo.

As precise and methodical was the enunciation of Begada and Thodi by D. Balakrishna on the veena (same day 9.15 a.m.). His command over the nuances like Gamakas and rhetorical effects was commendable. His controlled spontaneity and technical assurance in the use of the different registers had their desired aesthetic impact in Kaddanuvuriki (Thodi). It was a sprightly recital. M.R. Sashikant, also a disciple of V. Doreswamy Iyengar was equally impressive (March 10). His Bhairavi (Odibarayya) at once testified that he is gaining ground, especially in the aspect of rhythm. A reassuring recital.

NSR



D. Balakrishna



R.K. Srinivasa Murthy

As revealing was the violin solo of Vanamala Dikshit in the South Zone Hook-Up (March 10, 10 p.m.). Her instrumental timbre was light and weighty to suit the modal form and lyrical need which itself is a sign of maturity. This was evident as much in the opening Mahaganapate (Abhogi) as in the Kalyani (Himachala) number that followed. Vanamala's alap for Thodi was neat, but fell short in its structural demands. The kriti (Sri Krishnam Bhaja) was accented with some racy 'swara' forays.

The veena recital of Bhagyalakshmi (March 11, 8.30 a.m) was not as evocative. Though her Begade kriti Vallabha was neat, her alap for Shuddha-Saveri could not scale the pales of pedestrian level, betraying lack of seriousness. The kriti Subramanyena was passable in its lyrical demands. But veteran V. Deshikachar's flute (March 12, 8.30 a.m) was remarkable for its tonal flourish. His Behag coaxed out of the instrument, some delectable 'sancharas' of placid calm alternated with vibrant rhythm. The violin support by M. Nagaraj undoubtedly enriched the recital's aesthetic overtones.

T.R. Vembu is as seasoned an artiste. But the vocal (9.30 a.m the same day) was a patch on the earlier concert. Even the lovely Chakravaka

piece, Idisamayamu could not reveal any aesthetic sensitivity in the rendition. Shaila Subramanyam (8.30 a.m March 13) was a shade better. Her Shankarabhara (Swararagasudha) was true to form, but there were too many slips in 'swarasthanas' that could be ignored. In comparison, the veena concert of R. Veena was more evocative. Vasanta-Bhairavi (Needayarada) certainly gave her a steady start. As pleasing was Simhendramadhya

(Needuchara-namule). Indeed, there was nothing extraordinary in the rendition. But there were no let-ups in the fingering and that was a great relief.

But another veena artiste Anuradha Madhusudan (9.30 a.m March 15) showed marked improvement in tonal timbre and modal imagination. Mokshamu (Saramati) had a graceful delineation, giving Anuradha a fine start. Her alap for Bilahari was also convincing, most of the familiar 'sancharas' in tact. But the kriti failed to fully live upto expectation, repeated slips marring its overall impact.

ESSENCE

Attention Organisers

Music and dance institutions are requested to send their programmes to the Editor, PHOENIX, 138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar Bangalore 560009 before the first week of every month.

Bombay Beat**Amjad Ali Khan turns Fifty**

Sarod maestro Ustad Amjad Ali Khan's 50th birthday was celebrated in Bombay by The Economic Times by organising a three day music festival, "Raag Yatra", from March 20 at the Nehru Centre, Mumbai. It was sponsored by Godrej-GE Appliances Ltd.

Amaan Ali Bangash (Sarod), Ustad Zakir Hussain (Tabla), Pandit Bhimsen Joshi (Vocal), Gundecha Brothers (Dhrupad), Shahid Parvez (Sitar), Pandit Kashinath Mishra (Tabla) and Ustad Shafaat Ahmed Khan (Tabla) participated in the celebrations.

Lec Dem

A lecture demonstration on a new broadbased, thorough foundation for Indian classical and film music was organised by Karaikudi Subramanian at the Sri Shanmukha-nanda Sabha, Bombay on March 20, 96.

Dance Ensemble

'Jaya Jaya Sankara', a dance ensemble was presented by Sri Raja Rajeshwari Bharata Natya Kala Mandira at the Sivaswamy auditorium, Chembur.

Rhythm Ensemble

A Rhythm Ensemble by Zakir Hussain and thavil maestro A.K. Palanivel was organised at Rang Bhavan, Mumbai on February 29.

They were supported on percussion by Selva Ganesh (kanjira), Bhavani Shankar (pakwaj), Vijay Chauhan (dholki), and Fazal Qureshi (tabla). Ustad Sultan Khan played sarangi.

The concert began with an interpretation of the Tandava, Shiva's

dance of destruction, performed by Zakir with Sivamani and Taufiq. Fazal and Bhavani Shankar joined the trio for the next piece. Zakir and Fazal then played a lengthy duet accompanied by Sultan Khan.

-Geetha Raja

Cassettes Released

Bhandarakeri Mathadeesha Sri Vidyeshya Teertharu released two audio cassettes on Vadiraja and Vijayadasa kritis rendered by R.K. Padmanabha and D.V. Nagaaan and M.S. Sheela and books supporting the cassettes, on March 31, 96 at the jam packed Rama Mandira, Auditorium Bangalore.

After a *goshli gayana* by over 150 artistes, R.K. Padmanabha, Secretary of the Sharada Kala Kendra, welcomed the participants and spoke on the activities of the kendra in bringing out number of audio cassettes and books supporting them. He also announced the names of donors.

Later Pushkarachar gave a discourse on specialities of Vadiraja's kritis. Vidyeshya Teertharu blessed with his presidential address.

Seminar on Dasa Sahitya

Scholars and artistes, led by Prof S.K. Ramachandra Rao paid glowing tributes to the legendary mystics of Karnataka whose lyrics have come to be referred to as Dasa Sahitya. These lyrics purporting Bhakti and worldly

wisdom have contributed immensely for the flowering of the twin arts of music and dance in the region.

They were speaking at a two-day seminar on March 16-17, organised by the Ponniah Lalitakala Academy. While Leela Ramanathan, Tulsi Ramachandra, Shanta Jayateertha, Lalitha Srinivasan, K. Ramamurthy Rao and M.V. Subramanya spoke on the different aspect of Dasa Sahitya, Kovaladi Rangarajan (Trichy), demonstrated on some traditional 'mattus' followed in the rendition of the lyrics. Senior dancers Tara Priyadarshini, Ranjini Ganesh, Manu Vijay and the students of the Ponniah Academy demonstrated how the rich Dasa Lore has enriched the dance repertoire.

SNC

Railway Concession to Artistes

Efforts of Prathibha Prahlad of Prasadha Foundation in getting 75% concession in II class sleeper and 50% in I class in Indian Railways have finally borne fruits.

Railway Board of Ministry of Railways in its notification No TC II/2055/93 Dt Feb 22, 96 has announced this concession effective from April 1, 96.

Alleppey Venkatesan, Secretary, of the Carnatic Musicians' Forum of India, welcoming the railway concessions to artistes in the Railway budget, said that photo-identity cards issued by the forum to the members could be presented along with concert invitation at ticket counters to ensure that the concessions reach only eligible persons.

The forum also requested music organisations not to scale down the remunerations to artistes consequent to the concession to ensure that benefits could reach the musicians.

Tuneful Encounters-4

Uncle Handel of the Ivories

S.N. Sivaswamy

The late Handel Manuel was one of the most extraordinary musical talents with whom I had the privilege to move closely while I was in Madras.

Handel Manuel's attentiveness as a child to music and ability to play correct musical chords on the keyboard far beyond one's expectations from a tiny tot prompted his parents to call him by the first name Handel (after George Frederick Handel, the celebrated seventeenth - eighteenth century composer of operas and oratorios that made musical history).

Handel Manuel was in All India Radio as a pianist but he did a number of jobs that he liked, such as announcing programmes, conducting children's varieties (he was uncle Handel to hundreds of children), scheduling recorded music, and auditioning western music artistes. Besides the piano, he played the church organ and the electric organ which was new to Madras and we had to go to Madras Christian College at Tambaram for booking the instrument for each concert.

It was war time (Second World War) and musical troupes consisting of the most popular musicians of the day used to tour places where allied forces were stationed. Madras was one such place. The artistes in these troupes, after once hearing Handel Manuel playing on the Piano insisted on his accompanying them in all their performances. In fact, there were ef-

forts to make him a member of the troupe (called ENSA) and take him around the world, but Handel was content to stay in Madras.

From Handel Manuel I learnt the rudiments of Western music, the Major and Minor scales, symphony and polyphony, harmony and melody, notes and chords, soprano and contralto, bass and tenor, pianissimo and FORTISSIMO and so on. He also taught me how to read musical notations enough to turn the pages while he was engaged in coaxing the melodies on the keyboard with his magical fingers. From this good friend I learnt how to pick the notes of familiar ragas on the piano like Sankarabharanam and Keeravani.

One of Handel Manuel's favourite pastimes was to visit, along with a couple of our colleagues, the race course at Guindy. Neither he nor any of my other friends had the resources or the inclination to indulge in horse racing. What they used to do was to invest five rupees in an event called 'lucky five'. Horses running in the day's races coming within the first three places in each of the races won a modest sum. I used to send five rupees with Handel to try my luck. Once just once, he brought back forty five rupees to me - a small fortune in those days, but more than sufficient to cover a visit to the local Globe cinema to see a Hollywood Musical, with a 'Cuppa' thrown in for good measure! And these was money left for buying a 'Srutu box' for my wife.

AAKAAAR Summer Camp in Bharathanatyam

Ponniah Lalithakala Academy, Bangalore is conducting a three week intensive training for dance aspirants from May 6 to May 26, '96.

The areas of Teaching are:

Slokas, yoga, adavus, theory, practical, music and guest lectures on different aspects relevant to dance and dancer. The classes will be conducted by exponents in the field.

Detailed programme will be informed at the time of admission. Candidates are expected to attend the classes from 6.30 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. The course is planned as day boarding with suitable, well planned and balanced diet, breaks and drinks. Interested candidates between the age group of 10 to 18 years are requested to contact: Padmini Rao, Director, for further details.

Register before 24th April, '96.

For Details Contact:
Padmini Rao, Director -
Aakaar,
429, Ponnaiah Lalithakala
Academy Middle School, II
Cross Road V.V.Puram,
Bangalore -560004.
Telephone: 6670013

WHAT NANDIKESWARA DIDN'T FORESEE!

Manu Vijay

The Abhinaya Darpana puts down some specification for a dancer, form, figure, eyes, etc. While Nandikeshwara, it seems, concerned himself only with physical appearances. I on the other hand, feel that other social requirements must also be fulfilled to make a dancer.

Financial considerations, I think play an important role, as they do in all other walks of life. If a student's parents can afford her guru's fees initially, considerable savings are required to turn a little girl into a beautiful and graceful dancer. The Rangapravasha, of course, could drain considerable savings. Costumes, jewellery, auditorium, brochures, photographs, stage decor, not to mention the Guru dakshina, musicians' fees and VIP treatment to countless guests and family tea, coffee, dinner et al is enough to scare a middle class family off the art.

As if that were not enough, every step forward from then on is an Herculean task, performances have to be regularly funded if the daughter wants to become a dancer of repute. Prestigious sabhas 'invite' dancers for programmes, but their coffers cannot fund her. The pittance given by the State does not even cover expenses and hence, daddy's pockets get lighter by each programme. The Guru's fees sky rockets as the girl's learning advances, and a few thousands are demanded for every 'marga'. By the time the daughter is advanced enough to even cover expenses, daddy is well on the way to bankruptcy!

Social contacts are, of course, yet another consideration. Well placed families, with friends in high places acquire programmes for corporate seminars, conferences and for foreign delegations, while those without the above will find their aspirations nipped in the bud.

Public relations are a must. Regular social calls, with a dinner thrown in with the powers that be, would help a long way in furthering that career.

In Lighter Vein

In addition, there are a few characteristics that a potential dancer should not have. An interfering family probably tops the list. Well meaning parents who insist on pushing uninterested or untalented children are every guru's nightmare. Tender hearted grand parents who wish to see the darling grand daughter in silk and finery on stage well before they are incapable; relatives, aunts and uncles who always seem to know better about how a dancer must be taught, can be more hindrance than a help.

Now that I had added to the list of what a dancer should be like, I proceeded to put away pen and paper, while a thought struck me. What about talent, I wonder? That old-fashioned orthodox ingredient that went into making a dancer of yester years. What about hard work, perseverance, a deeper understanding of the art and sensibility about Indian culture? Don't we also need to throw in a keen ear for

music, a respect for Indian art and mythology and a deeper intelligence that allows one to view the art with a futuristic eye? The requirements, I find seem to be mounting up.

While we subject children to torturous entrance tests to enter nursery school, why aren't dance institutions and gurus more stringent about the students they take in? Parents play as important a role in the making of a dancer, as they do in child's education and need to provide a solid, traditional India upbringing and play a supportive, but not pushy role. Probably then we'll have 99% scoring future performers, vis-a-vis our PU scores. ♦

Agenda for May

Bangalore Gayana Samaja

On May 12, 96 at 4-15 pm Aruna Sairam sings at the Bangalore Gayana Samaja.

Devagiri Sangeetha Sabha

Devagiri Sangeetha Sabha, Bangalore celebrates its 10th anniversary with a vocal recital by S. Shankar on May 11, 96 at 6 pm. Other programmes are:

May 17: Harini and Sharada (Vocal)
V.K. Raman (Flute)

May 18: Master Kishan (Veena)
N.R. Prashant (Vocal)

May 19: Rajkamal (Flute)
T.V. Ramaprasad (Vocal)

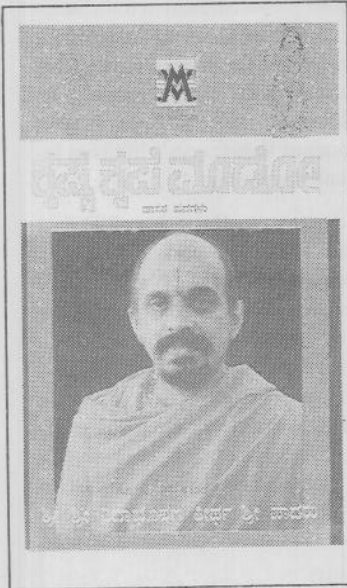
ALL ARE WELCOME

Cassette



Causerie

Krishna Kripe Maado: MV
Live cassettes: (MVD 2012 - Stereo). 60 Minutes. Rs 35/-



As the title suggests, this cassette is a selection of devotionals. They are rendered by Sri Vidyabushana Sripadaru, the saint-singer whose euphonic music has won him fans even among the learned and laity. As his wont, the swamiji's singing lays stress on the lyrical essence of the compositions, each in a tune that enhances the emotional appeal. It makes good listening, the more than half-a-dozen Dasara Padas and a couple of verses from Krishna Kamamrita running like a bhajan session.



Shatatantri Veena (Santur)
Hindustani Instrumental. Sangeetha (6 ECDB - 574 Stereo)

The sub-title on the cassette says "In combination". Perhaps rightly so as the main artiste R. Visweswaran (Madras) is less known in the Hindustani world of music than his 'tabla saathi' Fazal Qureshi. But as one listens to Visvesh's delineation of the weighty Puriya-Dhanashri, it is evident that he is no novice either. Indeed, they make a pleasant two-some, combining understandingly to produce an enjoyable melodic fare.

Visvesh is a disciple of the renowned Santoor maestro Shivkumar Sharma. He is well versed in both the Carnatic and Hindustani styles, though his first love is the latter. But for a short 'dhun' at the end, the entire run is devoted to a single raga, the air spanning the whole gamut from a lively alap, graceful jod, liling jhala to 'gat' in two speeds. Fazal's tabla 'sathi' complements the rhythmic 'bandhish' with skill and imagination.

Dakshinottaram, a Sangeetha Cassette, P6 ECDB, Stereo. Rs 35/-

Vocalist Shamala G Bhave is known for her innovative ideas. This latest cassette of hers is another such novelty. The bill starting with a sloka is nothing new. But the way the familiar compositions are presented is. In

the sense, she tries to bring out the parallels of the ragas in the two systems such as Bhaiavi and Mayamalavagoula, Thodi and Shubha-Pantuvarali, Sohani and Hamsanandi and Amir Kalyali.

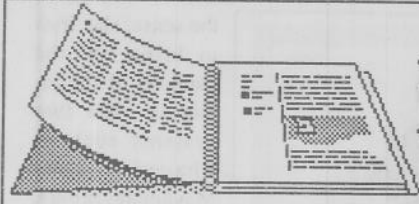
Shamala has many more such cassettes under the same banner. Some interesting titles are: Jaya Jaya Deva Hare, Jina Geeta Ganga, Santa Gana Saurabha, Dasa Gana Ganga, etc. There are a couple of classical collections to boot, besides a Jugalbandi, with Nagamani Srinath. They speak for her versatility.

SN C



A listing in 'today's edngagements' column of Bangalore's English Daily, Deccan Herald read thus:

"Inauguration of the festival by Madurai Seshagopalan and vocal concert by H.N. Nanjegowda"



Review

SNC

Ksetrayya made Accessible

MUVVAGOPALA PADAVALI (*Telugu Lyrics of Kshetranya*): With poetic English translation and notes on Aesthetics by Dr B. Rajanikantha Rao. Publishers: Rajani Publications, "Vibhavari" SF(1)i(B) Venus Apartments, Tikkle Road, Vijayawada 520010. PP.342. Price Rs.250/-.

The repertoire of Indian classical dance, more particularly Bharathanatyam, is sustained by a wide variety of musical compositions. Most of these musical pieces are by saint-singers and the songs are their outpourings about their deep love to their chosen deities. They are as popular on the concert stage as on the dance arena down the ages.

If works like the Jatiswaram (or Swarajati), Varnam (both thana and pada variations), and Thillana serve the Nritta aspect of dance, there are as many Padams, Javalis, Keertanas and devotionals to serve its counterpart - Abhinaya.

Among them the Javalis with their amorous overtones and Padams with their variegated Nayika-Nayaka 'bhedas' offer excellent scope for dancerly interpretation. They are verily test pieces to make an assessment of the dancers' sensibilities.

These compositions are extant in all the southern languages, besides Sanskrit. The best known lyricists in this category are Jayadeva (Sanskrit) and Kshetranya (Telugu), each addressing himself to his chosen deity,

Jagannath and Muvvagopala respectively. They are love lyrics, but the lover in each case is the divine entity. Likewise, the poet identifies himself as the Nayika, personified as Radha in the case of Jayadeva and as Mohanangi in the case of Kshetranya.

Their lyrics exemplify their ecstatic love for the Lord, the sentiment often appropriating itself to erotic love. Hence they are ideal for Abhinaya and have become an essential part of dance repertoire.

But while the Ashtapadis have been made available with exhaustive translations in all the languages, the Padams of Kshetranya are found only in Telugu, collected and annotated by renowned musicians like Manchala Jagannatha Rao and Voleti

Venkateswarulu. Hence dancers in the other regions have had to seek explanations from Telugu scholars before including them in their repertoire.

In this background, the book under review will be welcomed by all Kannada and Tamil oriented musicians and dancers. It would be an asset in their creative pursuits. Having been a senior official in the Ministry of Broadcasting, the author has been able to appreciate the needs and requirements of artistes in such cases. Hence he has not only given exhaustive translations of the Padams, but also provided them in transliteration. His brief notes on the different Nayikas and the Nayika attributable to each Padam should enhance its usefulness to dancers. Rajani's brief account of Kshetranya's life is as lucid and interesting.

As an author Rajani is well-known in the world of musical literature through his Andhra Vaggeyakara Charitramu which won for him the Sahitya Akademi award and the two monographs on Kshetranya and Ramadasu in English. But the present book is certainly of greater significance. It is a monumental work that fills a long felt need in the world of art and literature, and especially dance.

Power of Music

*It is rare to find a man of music divine,
Great music will even savages refine,
It is a mystery none can to music confine.*

*It is high beyond the ravages of time,
It is universal not bound by any clime,
It is sheer joy to hear melodies sublime,
To hate beauties of music is a crime.*

*If a man's life is a shoer of melody,
His life will never end in tragedy,
The art of supreme music can embody,
All pleasures making life a comedy*

M.C.Narasa Raju, Chirala

While setting your jewellery with
fine quality

American Diamonds

Ask only for

Kumar Gems

Pioneers in the field of synthetic diamonds for
over two decades

Kumar Gems

SriLakshmi Vittobha Complex, 160 Big Bazar,
Tiruchirapally 620008 © 31359



Vaishnavi
RANGE
with Designers Tussles

Meerakshi
Silks & Crepes

Choice of over
50 Designs
to choose

Manufactured and Marketed by :
Radhakrishna & Co.
Bangalore 560 002
Phone: 2213748, 2241567

Available in all
leading Stores in
India and abroad

OPTION

Phoenix

May 96

M. Ramanathan

Rs 5-00

JOURNAL ON MUSIC & DANCE



While setting your jewellery with
fine quality

American Diamonds

Ask only for

Kumar Gems

Pioneers in the field of synthetic diamonds for
over two decades

Kumar Gems

SriLakshmi Vittobha Complex, 160 Big Bazar,
Tiruchirapally 620008 © 31359



n. ramamurthy

PHOENIX

Journal on Music and Dance

S.N.Chandrasekhar
67 Basappa Layout
Bangalore 560018 ☎ 6675758
Editor

N.Sundarraaj
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009 ☎ 2263696
Managing Editor

B. Rajashekar
☎ 2216459
Advertising Manager

Representatives
Ganapathi Bhat
Hubli -Dharwar
K. Ramamurthy Rao
Mysore
Geeta Raja
9 Chhaya, Jam-e-Jamshed Road
Matunga, Bombay 400019
☎ 412 2074

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00
Three Years: Rs 140-00

Please send all remittances to
PHOENIX
The Circulation Manager
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009 ☎ 2263696
(Cheques to be drawn on
'PHOENIX')

RN 45468/87

Vol 1

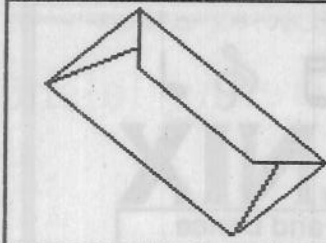
May 1996

No 7

Contents

4	Readers' Write
<hr/>	
5	Editorial-Ferretting Talent
<hr/>	
7	Three Phases of 'Shree'
<hr/>	
8	Make up of a Green Room
<hr/>	
9	MS - The Living Legend
<hr/>	
12	Calling AIR
<hr/>	
15	Vinayak Torvi wins Fans in Delhi
<hr/>	
16	Workshops Galore

Cover Photo by
N.SUNDARRAJ



Readers Write

Jugalbandi

It is interesting to note the facts revealed on Jugalbandi, which still remains a controversial subject. Though many interpret in many terms, it is a thought provoking subject.

It is astonishing to note that R.K.Padmanabha, a vocalist gave a veena concert at Mysore (page 8 of March issue). I was taken aback to note R.K.Padmanabha is the son of R.S.Keshava Murthy

Murali, Mysore

(The veena concert was by R.K.Padmanabha of Mysore and not of Bangalore. The error is regretted.

Editor)

Good Editorial

Permit me to express my high appreciation at the get up and editorial contents you have been displaying in Phoenix.

I wish you continued success.

*R.Visweshwaran
Mysore*

Good Editorial

I am impressed by the varieties of features. May be you should have a section for the conceptional aspects, which will help to fill up the gaps left by teachers who teach kritis, or dance pieces without enlightening the students of the principles governing their composition. Perhaps, a little theory will make them better practitioners or at least fill them with a little confidence. By and by, 'Phoenix' may venture into the aspects of 'Natyā' left out now.

Prof.M.S.Nagaraja,Bangalore

Congrats Venkatram

I have received Phoenix, what ever Venkatram does, he does it well and if I may say so, he breaths 'Sangeetham'. Perhaps he has offered his mind, body and soul to the 'Sangeetha Devatha'.

Karnatakam and especially the old Mysore State has produced so many brilliant and scholarly 'Vaggeyakars' and sangeetha vidwans. Dating back to Veena Seshanna, Bidaram Krishnappa, T. Chowdiah, Vasudevachar, Sadasiva Row and Bangalore Nagarathnammal.

Phoenix, I wish, should relate the articles of the old time masters for the benefit of the future younger generation.

*S.Rajagopalan
Madras*

Welcome

'Phoenix' is a welcome appearance and is well got up. May it flourish for the mythical period of six or seven centuries and continue thereafter too!

The Editor has commented '..... concede that artistes of Tamil Nadu are hard working, subscribe to a standard and aim at excellence... many of our musicians and dancers are not incapable of meeting such a challenge...'

May the challenge be taken seriously. If Madras is the Mecca of fine arts, Bangalore-Mysore could be made the Super-Mecca combining the glories of Mysore, Tanjore, Travancore and Vizianagaram given the will and a dozen enthusiasts to take the plunge. With its industrial affluence, patrons

and sponsors are yet to be tapped. May 1996-97 be the year of dedication!

*S.Rajagopalan
Madras*

Garlands

With help from B.V.K. Sastry, .Padma Murthy, Raghusutha and the AIR, I had addressed scores of artistes for helping me with their bio-data for inclusion in the pioneering, non-commercial 'Garland' series. Scores are yet to reply. Letters go unnoticed! Dr Sampat Kumaracharya wrote to me not to get disheartened since it had been his experience too. I have included scores of legendary and upcoming artistes of Karnataka in the volumes "A Garland", 'Another Garland' and 'Yet Another Garland'. Now the last volume 'Fragrant Garland' is being got up. May I request artistes whose names are yet to be included to furnish full bio-data with specific periods before the end of May 1996. Such requests had been made through Sruti, the Hindu, Indian Express too. Now Phoenix reiterates it.

*S.Rajagopalan
Madras*

Much Needed

Congratulations on the launching of a new journal, "Phoenix".

A journal in music and dance was very much needed in India. Except for 'Sangeeth Natak', there is practically none. The journal of Indian Musicological Society, Baroda is only on music and like the Madras Music Academy journal, it publishes even non-research based articles.

'Shanmukha' too is a mixed fare. 'SRUTI' of course is a magazine of high repute. The first issue of 'Phoenix' too has the look of a magazine, I hope it will at least have one part reserved for research based articles. There really is a search of serious journals backed by good band of referees.

N. Ramanathan, Madras

Editorial

Ferreting Talent

The annual music festival in connection with the Sri Ramanavami celebrations which extends to nearly a fortnight in some and to over a month in other localities in the City, has become a fertile ground to ferret talent. While many established musicians vie with one another to impress the discerning listener, a few organisations, notably the Ramaseva Mandali of Chamarajpet, throw open the arena for aspirants on the look out for opportunities. That indeed is an ideal way to scout talent, and if found promising, find ways and means of promoting it.

One big snag in the proposition is that it is not always that one comes across genuine talent. More often than not sheer obligation is the deciding factor. After all, not all forums have the means to keep track of talent and obligation can fulfil a dual purpose. But the consequences could be disastrous both to the sponsor and the incumbent.

In the last couple of years, including the season that is over recently, a few absolutely raw youngsters have managed to make their way to the dais. They were total greenhorns. The only saving grace in their case is that they hadn't mustered an audience that is outside the purview of their family. But the one who, in such circumstances, is put to embarrassment is the hapless Guru. Occasions are not wanting when the latter have faced music, unable to answer awkward questions of acquaintances as to how they had allowed a novice to make the bow. They have no escape other than pleading guilty, explaining how they are helpless victims in the presence of fond parents and dear ones who are overly enthusiastic in displaying a 'prodigy' of the family! Unfortunately, neither seem to realise that a premature exposure not only gives rise to a false pride that is detrimental to progress, but more importantly, the poor showing may lead to his blacklisting altogether. Such a fate has befallen more than one incumbent in the recent past.

The organisers also have a duty in this regard. It should not be forgotten that such performance may tell upon the very reputation of an organisation. Moreover, their efforts should not be purposeless. At least they should have the satisfaction of good listening and certainly not something from which one would run away! They must stick to some standard, if need be, by referring to the concerned gurus.

It is equally important for the organisers to see that the junior concerts are not light-hearted affairs. At any rate, not a formality, if the oft-repeated slogan "catch them young" has to have significance. The imperative need is to see that they have a sizeable audience, if need be, by making it obligatory for all the artistes billed in the slot to attend the concerts of their compeers. That is not asking much, but one that will usher in some seriousness which is so essential for the flowering of talent. Inculcating a habit of regularly listening to music is as important for progress in the art as going to the concert stage.

S.N.Chandrasekhar



COMMITTED TO TRAIN & TO ENTHRALL !

!!! FIRST OF ITS KIND IN INDIA !!!



NATYA INSTITUTE OF KATHAK & CHOREOGRAPHY

[Affiliated to Bangalore University & Recognised by Government of Karnataka]

invites application from DANCERS for

B.A DEGREE IN KATHAK & CHOREOGRAPHY

[Applicants should have passed 10+2 / P.U.C. or Equivalent]

The Degree Syllabus includes the following subjects :

- World History of Dance*
- Natyashastra*
- History of Art & Choreography*
- Stage Design & Lighting*
- Music Composition*
- Mime & Movement*
- Aesthetics*
- Foundation & Diploma Course in Kathak
- Widely Travelled Performing Unit
- Lecture-Demonstration & Workshops
- Field Trips to Cultural Centres
- Classes in Indian Martial Arts & Dances

For Prospectus & further details contact :

Smt Maya Rao

Director

Natya Institute of Kathak & Choreography
37, 17th Cross, Malleswaram, Bangalore 560055
Karnataka © 2263626

Hurry ! Last date for receiving applications June 30, 1996

Tuneful Encounters-5 Three Faces of "Shree"

S.N.Sivaswamy



Rajan Mishra and Sajan Mishra

The Raga "Shree" of the Hindusthani musical system occupies a very special corner in my musical nostalgia. I like its fascinating interplay of notes and the lingering quality of its preponderant swara RE ("Komal rishabh").

I have heard many exquisite renderings of the raga, but three of them, one very recent, have made indelible impressions on my mind.

One of them, and indeed the oldest, is the vintage treat provided by Pandit D.V. Paluskar, "Harikechana" on his rare L.P record. As was his wont, Paluskar has made the whole essay popular and palpable to even uninitiated ears. What makes the raga come alive in that record is Paluskar's sincere effort to keep his scholarship in the background and portray the sound of the raga in the simplest idioms.

My second lasting experience with the raga was also on a beautiful

L.P record, which is a rendering on Surbahar and Sitar respectively by Imrat Hussain Khan (brother of the legendary sitarist Vilayat Khan). Unlike Paluskar's, Imrat Khan's treatment of the raga is verily an exhibition of the dexterity of his skilled fingers. I had heard him play "Shree" on the Sitar even before I acquired the L.P, on the radio, in a National Programme, when, for almost the entire duration of the concert, Imrat Khan spun the magic of the raga and sent me searching for its recording, if any. After a long search, I found the record in a Calcutta music shop.

Throughout the first side of the record Imrat Khan has played on the Surbahar, a well thought out and expansive alap, and on the other side, he has played on the Sitar, first a slow and then a fast 'gat'. He has explored the depths of the raga, particularly during the alap, treating us with a masterly flow of 'meends' and 'gamaka's'.

Imrat Khan has concentrated on the delineation of "Komal Rishabh" tirelessly and developed "Tivra Nishad" and "Tivra Madhyam" to squeeze out all their nuances. In the process, he has provided a feast of melody. At the end, the intricate "taan" patterns he has created in breath-taking speed leave us spellbound.

While I have repeatedly enjoyed listening to Paluskar's 'Shree' and Imrat Khan's 'Shree', I wonder when I would have a second opportunity of listening to Rajan Mishra and Sajan Mishra singing the raga, my latest chance to be thrilled by it. Rajan Mishra and Sajan Mishra had chosen 'Shree' as the main raga of their concert on the penultimate day of the recent Ramanavami Music Festival at the Fort Maidan in Bangalore.

Gifted with rich, vibrant voices, the Mishra brothers were in full form that day and served us a remarkably beautiful exposition of 'Shree' leaving their audience craving for more!

RMV Sangeetha Sabha

Rajmahal Vilas Sangeetha Sabha, Bangalore was inaugurated by Veena Maestro V.Doreswamy Iyengar on January 26, 96.

Aiming to cater to the cultural needs of Sanjay Nagar, Dollar Colony, Postal Colony, New BEL Road, Naga Shetty Halli, UAS Layout and surrounding areas, the Sabha will conduct music concerts on the last Friday of the month from 4.15 to 6.45 PM at the Ragothaman Memorial Building, RMS Colony, RMV II Stage.

V.Doreswamy Iyengar and D. Balakrishna, M.S. Sheela, Sikkil Mala Chandrashekar and M.Nagaraj-M. Manjunath have given concerts under its auspices.

M.V. Subramanya

In Lighter Vein

Make-Up of a Green Room

Manu Vijay



Make up rooms, I suppose, are 'made' with a purpose. The 'green' rooms artistes encounter, often baffle the mind. If they are, indeed to allow the dancer to prepare herself for the performance ahead; should they not provide her with the amenities for the same? How could a grey room with huge open windows overlooking a field of congress grass, with a mirror that could drive Sushmita Sen to insanity, pass off as a green room, I wonder! I don't suppose the reference could be to the moss, I found growing on the walls of one of the well known 'green' rooms I once had the good fortune of visiting.

Green rooms, like everything else in India, can be classified and sub-classified. There are those that are

designed to make the dancer feel like a princess. They resemble the tower of a fairy tale castle, spiral staircase and all. A dancer's energies, rather than being spent on a strenuous thillana, is spent weaving her way up the labyrinthine steps to powder her nose. On the other hand, there is that green room which resembles a dungeon. One would expect to encounter a prisoner in chains, rather than a graceful dancer attired in silks. The steps in this instance, are large and dark, and lead down into the earth.

Of course, every dancer has encountered the green room that gives her the impression of a candle lit ambience. She has just the one 20 watt bulb, and has to squint to wear her eye-liner. Then there is one that resembles a moon lit night. There are

so many tube lights, that our dancer looks a little blue when she makes her appearance on stage.

Dance in an exhibition or pandal, and you will be presented with a green room that will feel like you are dressing up in a stadium - there are spectators to watch the show! There is of course, the mother of all green rooms, the one without the mirror. Dancers, carry a compact mirror in your hand bag. It would come in handy at times such as this.

Besides these broad classifications, you could find green rooms with mice, with cockroaches, with rain storms and desert conditions, with water overflowing from the sink, or dripping from the tap, etc. I am still on the lookout for the green room that will give me the five star comforts of mirror, light, water, easy access and hygiene!

Next Issue

Cover story on Bharatanatyam and Kathak dancer Pratibha.

Report on 15th Talavadyotsav 96

Calling AIR

Cassette Causerie

Kathak workshop held at Hubli

Bombay's concert scene by Geetha Raja

Know your artistes and City round-up

MS- the Living Legend

S.N.Chnadraseshkar

“What a great relief from the vocal and rhythmic pyro technics! Here was real music, music that is sublime, music for the soul. One could experience its enduring quality. All that is needed is the accent on raga and bhava”.

That was an outburst of the redoubtable T. Chowdiah, after he had accompanied M.S. Subbulakshmi the living legend, on the violin in a concert. Recounting the incident, the veteran veena artiste V. Doreswamy Iyengar explained how the violin maestro was beside himself while expressing his admiration for MS as an artiste of refinement.

It is no secret that it is anathema for many a male violinist to accompany a female artiste. It is infra-dig for them, though some ascribe the high pitch as the problem. The case with the mridangist is also not much different, unless it becomes inescapable as it happened in the case of the great Palghat Mani Iyer, who in his later years condescended to play for D.K. Pattammal, his ‘Sammandi’. The situation remains much the same even today.

There have been exceptions among violinists too. Notable among the seniors was R.K. Venkatarama Sastry who had enjoyed the privilege

of providing violin accompaniment for MS for long, V.V. Subramaniam being the other. R.K.V.’s mentor Chowdiah joined the tribe much later in his career and once he started on the course, there was no going back. The combination was as memorable as it had been when he accompanied all-time greats like Madurai Mani Iyer, Chembai, Ariyakudi and GNB.

Here are two more instances to show how the music of MS could move the learned and the laity alike. A cricket eleven had just returned after a fixture in the day. As the team entered the gates of its captain’s house,

the famous Meera bhajan, “Hari Tuma Haro” sung by MS wafted the evening air. The disc was being played inside the house. As the rendition reached its climax, one of the players involuntarily exclaimed ‘ayo’. Some passers by on the adjacent road rushed in to enquire what had happened. When explained, an elder among them agreed that it was natural as soulful music can stir the emotions of even the uninitiated!

The experience of the learned is more interesting. The occasion was the 80th birthday celebrations of Dr D.V. Gundappa, the doyen of Kannada literature. A concert by MS in the evening was part of the day-long function. As usual, the concert was a real treat, at the end of which MS took up the cymbals to intone “Dasana Madiko” (Nadanamakriya), one of her favourite Dasara padas. The lilt in the rhythm was so irresistible for DVG, that he suddenly got up from his seat and started dancing! It had moved him immensely. Indeed, It was a sight for the gods, with many in the packed Town Hall clapping to keep the beat!

It was that haunting voice, coupled with its sensitive appeal and evocative intonation that made Mahatma Gandhi exclaim that he would



rather have his favourite Meera bhajan "Hari Tuma Haro" spoken by MS than sung by another. That was his reaction when told that MS was not familiar with the song and that someone else could render it.

It is the same mesmerising effect that had prompted Sarojini Naidu to pass on the epithet "Nightingale" to MS. That again was the music that had moved Jawaharlal Nehru to muse, "Who am I, but a Prime Minister before this queen of melody".

A more fitting tribute had come from Ramakrishna Hegde, when he was the Chief Minister of Karnataka. He was the chief guest at a function at the local branch of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan to celebrate the 75th birthday of MS. Felicitating her Hegde remarked whether the powers that be recognised it or not, "She was the real 'Bharata Ratna'".

It is intriguing that it should be the only distinction (discontinued since a couple of years) which has remained elusive for her. Perhaps she should be holding a record (seven in all) for winning the largest number of honorary doctorates, including those of the Madras University (1987) and Shantiniketan (1991). She has been decorated with the President's award and the Padmabhushan, besides the Kalidas (1988) and the Konark (1991) Sammans. In 1974 she was made the Fellow of the Central Sangeet-Natak Akademi. To crown it all, MS was the first woman artiste to preside over the annual music conference of the Music Academy, Madras, thus receiving the coveted title Sangeeta Kalanidhi. And her performing record itself is mind-boggling, taking one to the remotest cultural centres of the world.



M.S. in 1956

It is a truism that music, and almost music alone, has the abstract quality for the artiste to appeal directly to his audience. Hence its universality and no other artiste has proved this point more emphatically than MS. An MS concert in a northern city in India has at all times drawn as large an audience as in the south and as appreciative of her music as it does a Bhimsen Joshi's, a Jesraj's, a Bade Gulam Ali's or a Ravishankar's. In her case the congenescenti has ceased to see any distinction in style. It is good, soulful music, music that is profound and enduring.

Till the advent of MS on the western music scene, Indian music for the westerner meant Hindustani instrumental, thanks to the influence of the two wizards, Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar. Listeners in Europe and America hardly knew anything of the complex Carnatic mode. But after the concert of MS at the Edinburgh Festival and later at the UN General Assembly, the whole complexion

changed, much to the delight of the well-known musicologist C.V. Narasimhan who was at the time UN Chef de Cabinet and at whose instance the UN concert was organised. As it happened in respect of Swami Vivekananda's address to the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, almost a century before, there was ecstatic reaction to her concert. The Press acclaimed it as a unique experience for the world body. Concert bookings for MS followed from all important cities of the US, including the Carnegie Foundation. M.S. had won the hearts of millions of music-lovers in America.

The best tribute came from the New York Times which said: "Subbulakshmi's vocal communication transcends words. The cliché of the voice used as an instrument seemed never more appropriate. Subbulakshmi and her ensemble are a revelation to the western world."

Music had come naturally to this genius of song. She was the daughter of (Veena) Shanmugha Vadivu, a well-known artiste of her day. She was well-versed both in the veena and vocal, always vocalising whatever she played on the veena. MS inherited her mother's dulcet voice, honing it to attain greater sensitivity and sophistication. As their home in Madurai all through the day bubbled with a musical aura, great names in the genre frequenting the doymna's home to exchange views on the art, it was possible for MS to imbibe all the finer points of music to emerge as a chiselled artiste. Opportunities to display her talent were also there for the asking and it did not take long for MS to win recognition as a vocalist of promise.

Her mellifluous voice had naturally opened the doors of the tinsel world for her. The films in which she appeared were instant successes, the prodigious number of songs being their main attraction. Her first film "Seva Sadan" had scored more than 20 songs, each a hit. A Carnatic classical like "Needucharana" (Kalyani), almost a forgotten number today, became as popular as the Hindustani piece "Shyama Sundara Madanamohana", a masterpiece of Narayanarao Vyas from whom MS had learnt it. Indeed, her knowledge of Hindustani style was of no mean order as she from time to time had learnt the intricacies of the style from stalwarts like Bade Ghulam Ali, Siddeswari Devi and others for the sake of exemplifying the compositions in Hindi and other north Indian languages in the distinct hue.

It was again her songs which had enhanced the commercial prospects of films like "Savitri", "Shakuntala" and last but not the least "Bhakta Meera", the last in both Tamil and Hindi. As Narada in the first and in

the title role in the two others, the producers had exploited every opportunity to introduce a song for MS and nothing suited her and her audience better too. Her co-stars were all proven celebrities (GNB who appeared opposite her in Shakuntala was the only fresher) in the cine world. Y.V. Rao, Shanta Apte, C. Nagaiah and Sherakalathur Shama were popular names in the films. But MS had stolen a march over each one of them by her sheer magnetic presence and melodic aria. Indeed, if she had continued in that glamour world, her fortunes would have been as affluent and fame as awe-inspiring. Then it would have certainly been a great loss to the world of classical music. It is here that T. Sadashivam, her astute husband deserves full compliments. It was he who had planned her later films with a specific purpose. When the purpose was fulfilled, it was he who steered her future as a vocalist of repute. Since their marriage in 1940 he has been her friend, philosopher and guide, rightly described as the architect of her career, a glorious one

at that.

It was at his instance that numerous endowments for religious, national and educational cause were created, beginning with the Kasturba Smarak Nidhi. The Sri Ramakrishna Mission and the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan are the other notable institutions which have benefited by the couple's munificence.

The repertoire of MS is verily inexhaustive. Besides a wide-ranging variety of classical compositions, she is a veritable storehouse of bhajans in almost all the Indian languages. Many of them are available in discs and cassettes. But the most popular of them all are: Sri Venkateswara Suprabhatam, Shankara's Bhajagovindam and Sri Vishnu Sahasranamam. They can be heard at all venues and at all times of the day, evoking a sense of reverence in the listener. They, indeed, will keep the name of M.S. Subbulakshmi ever green in the memory of generations to come!



This issue on M.S. Subbulakshmi is sponsored by Sudha Rao and A.H. Rama Rao, Rama Sudha Charitable Trust, Bangalore.

Calling AIR

Not unoften a listener who switches on the radio for music without knowing who the artiste is, would continue listening for two good reasons. The first obviously is because the music is eminently enduring. The other is to figure out the artiste who has made a grade despite being below par.

A listener recently had to contend with one too many cases in the second category. Surprisingly, the slots of these artistes indicated that they were in the higher grade. In actuality it is difficult to conceive how any of them could have made a grade at all!

Usha Ramamurthy (April 23, 10-10 am) takes the cake in this list. She is a gottuvadyam artiste, an instrument which has few adherents. The flourish in her playing also can vouch

for a long stint. But the music had no bearing. Neither Ramamanohari nor



Rajalakshmi Tirunarayan

Madhyamavati (Ramakatha) could speak for fidelity of form, swaras at random straying into the melodies. It is difficult to conceive how she could have been considered for a one-hour slot.

As conveniently avoidable are two vocalists, Ambuja Narayanan and Lalita Mohan who were featured at about the same time. They were mediocre to say the least and how such ablaunt ridden music could escape the notice of an audition panel is a mystery! Indeed such music can do credit neither to the artistes themselves nor to the medium sponsoring it.

R.V. Dakshinamurthy's veena (March 15, 8-30 am) was no more convincing, but certainly of some substance. His alap for Mohana was not free from slips, but the kriti Bhavanuta almost make up for the lapse. His Thillana (Darbari-Kanada) was reassuring.



A.V. Krishnamachar

It is at such depressing moments that a refreshing fare like that of Sita Rajan (Madras, 8-30 am the same day) brings relief. Her Surati (Sri Venkatesha) testified for sustained 'sadhakam' and aesthetic perception. What a contrast Padma Narayan's evocation for Bilahari (Idu Bhagya-Idu Bhagya) next morning was. Her Pantuvarali (Ramanatham) was as pedestrian, utter lack of concern for 'Sruti' reducing her efforts to nought.

Rajalakshmi Tirunarayan in her veena (March 17, 8-30 am) again proved that she is consistent. If her Begada (Vallabhanakasya) stood out for her cool, calm disposition, Saveri (Sri Kamakoti) reverberated with glowing cadences of the melody. Later at 10-10 am the same morning, M.S. Sheela (who is presently on a concert tour of the US) gave another impressive

performance in company with Nalina Mohan on Violin. The opening Abhogi kriti Sri Ramya Chitta was one of the cleanest pictures of the raga. Sheela's alap for Thodi (Sharadeye) had all the lyrical endearments of the raga. It was good



Saroja Natarajan

music, a perfect 'sruti' and meaningful 'gamakas' accounting for an elegant coherence. Nalina's accompaniment was as competent.

A.V. Krishnamachar in his violin solo (March 18, 8-30 am) was in fine touch. While Vagadeswari was rendered with great restraint, his Nadanamakriya, a graceful melody which has receded to the background, was marked for its depth of technique and imagination. But V.N. Padmini who followed him at 9-30 am could not rise

above the pedestrian. The Kannada piece in Malayamaruta could not shape well either in melodic grace or lyrical appeal. The gestalt appeared more convincing in Dwaitamusukha (Ritigoula).

Dwadasha Ranjani, a conglomeration of 12 variations of Ranjani was the highlight is the National Programme of Trichy Sisters (S. Prema, S. Jaya) on March 16. The duo synchronise well as evidenced in the opening number in Gambhiranata. Idisamayamu in Natakapriya was rendered with as much patience and insight. But their alap for Kalyani (Nijadasavarada) was hardly evocative, though the kriti had its lyrical flavour. But the lilting gait in the rare Ranjini combine was very interest-



Shanti Rao

ing, each variation showing a distinct character.

Shanti Rao's veena recital (March 19, 9-30 am) took of on a vibrant note with Sarasiruha (Nata). Pantuvarali was dignified in its portrayal, the kriti Ramanatham anchored with a flurry of glowing 'sargams'. Revati Murthy also veena (March 20, 8-30 am) was as competent Her alap for Bhairavi was noted for its purity of style, especially in the 'thanam' aspect. But the rendition of the kriti Upacharamu was uninspiring due to some slips. G.R. Jaya at 9-30 am on the same day started off in style with Budhamashrayami (Natakuranji). Her alap for Pantuvarali was also neat, though short of resonance. But her voice showed signs of strain in the 'tarasthayi' as she rendered the kriti Ninnunera. She is no doubt capable of more solid singing.

The Darbar Varnam (Chalamela) gave the father and daughter violin duet of Mysore Mahadevappa and Rupa a rollicking start (March 22, 8-30 am). They combined well, the alap for Mohana and the kriti that followed testifying to a very professional standard. It was a pleasant recital. Saroja Natarajan who was featured later (9-30 am) was her sure self as she intoned Charukeshi (Kripayapalaya). The rendition sounded a trifle

screechy in the upper octave, but certainly not but out of tune. The Kannada ditty Mareyabeda could not make an impact either lyrically or in raga-bhava.

As unevocative was M. Ramesh (March 23, 8-30 am). Be it Bilahari (Tolijanma) or Malayamaruta, the rendition reeked in 'besur', rendering the recital a futile exercise. Concurrently Raji Gopalakrishnan was on the air from Madras station. What a relief it was to listen to her tidy 'sruti' which

made all the difference. Her alap for Karaharapriya was noted for its modal fidelity, the rare kriti Srinivasa Tava Charanam enriched with some scintillating 'niraval' and swara passages.

The National programme on March 23 featured a flute recital by Prakash Vadera. His Shuddha Kalyan was impressive, Prakash giving equal importance to both the 'gayaki' and 'been' ang. His blowing was steady, soft nuances adding to the dignity of the melody. He concluded with a piece in Chandra-kaus which had the customary 'chalan' in it.

At 10-10 am next morning, a senior artiste T. Sharada played on the veena. Unusually, it was a shaky



M. Roopa



Revathi Murthy

start, Bhajare, the Athana piece not showing touch. The familiar Ninnuchepaka (Mandari) was in a better shape. It was only in Shankarabharana that the veteran settled down. The alap itself was full of glowing 'sancharas', the meaningful stasis in the delineation of the kriti, adding to its convincing imagery. But H.T. Ramaswamy's vocal (March 26, 8-30 am) fell short in its resonance, confirming that he has passed his best. His Kalyani piece could sustain almost entirely because of M. Nagaraj's violin liltig forays.

The flute recital of M.K. Pranesh (March 26, 9-30 am) showed great promise. Sangeetagnanam (Dhanyasi) revealed that he has a smooth blowing technique, though it loses steadiness in the upper reaches. His Kalyani (Srimadadi) stood out for its graceful cadences. This despite a mediocre violin support he received.

On March 29 (8-30 am) one chanced to hear an authoritative Abheri of Voleti Venkateswarulu on the Madras AIR. The alap was elaborate with stasis on the salient endearments of the melody.

It was a nostalgic experience, the kriti Nagumomu itself taking one back to the halcyon days of the great Musuri. The latter's recording could be heard a day or two earlier (March 24). The inimitable style came to the fore in Janaranjini and Saranga. The mainstay, however was Bhairavi (Neepadamulanu), and what a memorable treat it was, especially with stalwarts like Lalgudi Jayaraman (violin) and Trichy Shankaran (mridangam) enriching the denouement!

But there was hardly much to write home about the National Programme (March 20). The Hindustani vocal by S.S. Avasti was just ordinary, neither Maru-Bhag nor



R.A. Ramamani

Kiravani taking the discerning listener beyond the routine chords. It was pleasant without being scholarly. Nor was the South Zone Hook-up the next day by Bhanumathi Visvanath much different. She has a sweet voice, but the singing lacks depth, though the Arabhi piece did give her a sprightly start. Neetimati was equally convincing. But it was a testing time to identify Harikambodi in her rendition of Entara Nee. The distortion marred the earlier opinion no end!

It is in such depressing situations that a classic treat like the flute recording of B.N. Suresh (April 2, 8-30 am) refreshes. Be it the inspiring Kambodi varna or the celebrated Dachuko (Thodi), the gestalt in the attractive phraseology was complete, accounting for depth. The Neetimati piece was as edifying.

The customary verve in R.A. Ramamani's rendition (April 3, 8-30 am) of Anandabhairavi (Sri Ramachandra) lent an excellent start for her. Vachaspati (Kantachuda) was attended to in greater detail, though the Swaraprasthara appeared a trifle

long. It is in this aspect that Chitra Lingam's veena recital (same night at 9-30 pm) seemed better planned. The Behag Varnam provided an ideal tempo, Sri Gananatha the Malahari masterpiece augmenting the 'mela'. The alap for Shankarabharana, deftly supplemented with a neat Thanam and a Pallavi in the simple 'rupaka' tala could stand the test of both artistic finesse and technical necessity.

As satisfying was the violin solo (Hindustani style) of Prakash Sontakke (April, 10-30 pm) Yaman was the rag the youngster had opted for the day. Though the initial strokes were hesitant, once he drifted into the two-tiered 'gat' there was no lack of coherence in his music. It was a reassuring recital, especially in an instrument which is not as popular in the Hindustani style as in its Carnatic counterpart.

That popularity and that expertise is evidenced in good measure in a solo of M. Nagaraj (April 5, 8-30 am). The opening Shobillu (Jaganmohini) itself revealed that the young master was in the right spirit. His alap for Harikambodi visualised the elegant picture of the melody, the familiar kriti Ramanannu enriching its lyrical overtones. That was a class apart!

ESSENCE

Agenda for June

On June 30, 96 Rama and Chandrika sings at the Devagiri Sangitha Sabha, Banashankari II Stage, Bangalore under the aegis of Sri D Subbaramiah Fine Arts Trust and Devagiri Sangeetha Sabha, accompanied by Suncetha (violin), Vinod (mridangam) and Sampath-kumar Sharma (morsing).

Vinayak Torvi wins Fans in Delhi



Vinayak Torvi

It is nothing surprising that Pandit Vinayak Torvi, the well-known Hindusthani vocalist of Bangalore, should have created an indelible impression on the Delhi audience recently. His concert for the three-day Vasantotsava of Seher at the India International Centre, by all accounts was an instant success, one worthy of an artiste who is acclaimed as one of the leading lights of the present gen-

eration of Hindusthani musicians.

What is surprising however is that organisers in Delhi should have taken so long to recognise an artiste of his stature, an artiste who has won the hearts of connoisseurs all over the country, including those in Pune, Mumbai and Calcutta besides known centres of his home state.

His was rightly the inaugural concert. Vinayak intoning with an impactful Yaman Kalyan. The depth of his voice, taut 'taans', and brilliant bol-taans embellishing the 'bhadat' mesmerised the expectant listeners. Repeated applause and 'wah wah's' greeted the succinct 'layakari'.

Tilak Kamod, almost a forgotten melody, soon followed, Vinayak melodising the raag with a high degree of sensitivity. A well-known composition of the late Vinayachandra Moudgalya, a musicologist of yester years, was sensitised as effectively.

In keeping with the spirit of the season, the crisp alap doing full justice to Basant the 'uttarang pradhan' rag. The Basant atmosphere was almost palpable to the touch as Vinayak intoned "Paduva Brija Dekhana", the piece evoking memories of the late Abdul Karim Khan. Vinayak rounded off his inaugural outing in Delhi with a popular Mera bhajan in Jogia, soaked in 'Bhakti' ras.

No wonder that many in the packed auditorium were remorseful that they had missed listening to such a refined artiste for so long. Nor were they fully aware of the signal contribution Karnataka musicians had made to the Hindusthani style!

Torvi himself is one of the many such stalwarts. Though a banker, his dedication to music is total. It is only natural that he is decorated with honours by a number of organisations. To name only a few: the coveted Rajyotsava award, felicitation by the Mico Fine Arts Society and the Aryabhata Cultural Organisation and conferment of the title "Gana Gandharva" and Surmanai award of the Sur-Singar Samsad, Mumbai.

Keerti S Badseshi



Saraswathi Gana Sabha, Bangalore organised, 'Swara Laya Sangama', an ensemble of ghatam and morching at Odakathur Mutt, on March 4, 96.

Leading ghatam artiste, Sukanya Ramagopal played five ghatams, accompanied by B. Bhagyalakshmi, B. Rajasekar and L. Bhimachar on morsing.

Dear Reader

Your comments and views are most valuable to us and the others too. We shall gladly publish the best. But, for maximum impact and early coverage, make them brief. Send your comments to:

The Editor
PHOENIX
138, 5th Cross
Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009

Workshops Galore



The popular response at the increasing number of workshops in music and dance in the City is a sure indication of the growing interest of youngsters in the twin arts. Till recently, the concept was familiar only in the spheres of Carnatic music and Bharathanatyam.

Now it has spread to the realm of Hindustani music too, Vinayak Torvi of the Gururao Deshpande Sangeetha Sabha giving the lead. The refresher course Pandit Yashwant Bua Joshi of Bombay conducted for him recently was a great success going by the keen interest evinced by the aspirants and

Lalgudi Jayaraman's well attended Workshop



Yashwant Bua Joshi's Workshop

the regularity of the one-week course.

It was an interesting experience to sit through the training where the youngsters joined the Guru to master some familiar ragas like Bageshri, Kedar and Tilak-Kamod besides some morning melodies. The discussion on the different approaches in the 'Gharanas' was as educative.

If Torvi's workshop was for a week, the one sponsored by Suma Sudheendra's Tarangini Fine Arts, with violin maestro Lalgudi Jayaraman in charge, was limited to five days. Yet its utility certainly

cannot be under estimates, as both the teacher and the taught went whole hog to make the best use of the opportunity. Jayaraman had taken care to see that all the 40 aspirants had learnt the two varnams, two kritis and two Thillanas to his satisfaction.

The intensive training in Bharathanatyam conducted by Padmini Rao of Ponnaiah Lalitkala Academy was different in more than one sense. The duration was of three weeks and the number was restricted to less than 10 so as to see each student got individual attention. The training included both theory and practical, covering the entire gamut of the art. Though arduous, the budding dancers seemed to enjoy every moment of the six hour during each day!

Indian Music

Aspmprpis say
 Existent from the dawn of
 Human civilisation.
 Nurtured from bygone days
 The vedictimes, the fresh seedlings
 of music, a golden treasure,
 A glory from the hoary past.
 Our prophets, Tansen,
 Thyagaraju,
 Mirabai, Tukaram, Purandara
 Dasu,
 Ramadas, Annamacharya and
 Balamurali Krishna a master from
 the new generation,
 Carry Indian music, a mighty
 Ganges
 Flowing, gurgling, splashing
 All in supreme bliss and serenity
 A melody ever invigorating
 from eternity to eternity.

Support
PHOENIX

Know your Artistes

B.Dhruvaraj



B.Dhruvaraj

B.Dhruvaraj (35), one of the prominent mridangam players of younger generation is the son of morching vidwan L.Bimachar. He learnt mridangam from late H. Puttachar for 16 years and had advance training under the renowned Ramanathapuram C.S. Muragabhu-pathi.

Dhruvaraj achieved the technique of playing soft and perfect strokes to the core. He does not overshadow the main artiste. He is known for skillful solo playing in thani avarthanam which is balanced.

Dhruvaraj has accompanied most leading artistes in the state. There are few sabhas or festivals in Karnataka where Dhruvaraj has not participated. He has toured South Africa and Maritius.

Dhruvaraj is a commerce graduate of the Bangalore University and a rank holder in vidwat examination in instruments conducted by the Government of Karnataka. He is a B High artiste in Akashavani and has participated in AIR and Doordarshan concerts regularly.

Very soft spoken and mild mannered Dhruvaraj is a jeweller by profession running a well known jewellery firm. He also teaches mridangam.

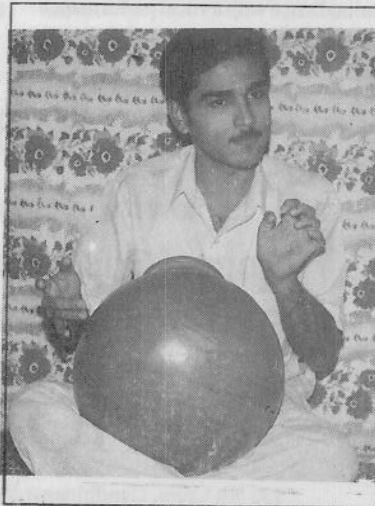
B.Dhruvaraj
5 Pillappa Lane, Nagarhpet Cross,
Bangalore 560002
© 2215853 (R), 2216459 (O)

Omkar

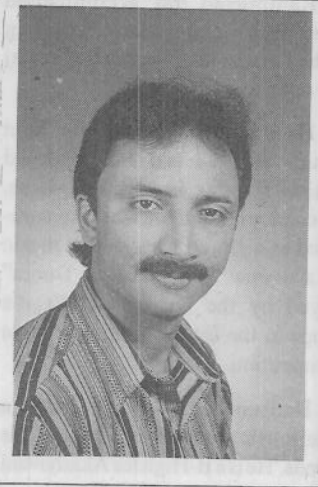
Ghatam artiste Omkar(23), had initial training in mridangam under V.R. Chandralekha and later came into the fold of T.A.S. Mani, Karnataka College of Percussion, Bangalore.

Omkar has passed the music examination conducted by the Government of Karnataka with distinction and has won many prizes during his college days. He has won an award in percussion competition conducted by the South Central Zone Cultural Centre held at Elur. He is a scholarship holder from Karnataka Sangeetha Nruthya Academy.

A popular artiste, he has accompanied many veteran artistes in leading music organisations regularly. He



Omkar



M.S. Ramprasad

is a B-grade artiste of All India Radio in mridangam and morching.

Omkar has toured Japan along with a team of percussion artistes for the music festival "Min On" in 1993 representing Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). He plays regularly for "Tala Tarangini", a percussion ensemble directed by his guru T.A.S. Mani.

Omkar is a science graduate of Bangalore University.

G. Omkar
99, III Cross, 8th Main, Jakkasandra Block, Koramangala, Bangalore 560034 © 553 8164

M.S. Ramprasad

M.S. Ramprasad (30), a more popular name in light music arena, is a multi talented artiste well known as a singer, composer, music director and a conductor of light music ensembles.

Born and brought up in the family of musicians Ramaprasad learnt mridangam under Vasudeva Rao Mohite from 1970 and later from Salem S Kannan. Ramprasad is a graduate from the National College, Bangalore. He has won prizes in many inter collegiate competitions.

Ranprasad has accompanied many leading musicians including Kadri Gopalnath, Nagavalli Nagaraj and others.

He developed a taste for light music in 1988 and has presented musical features in AIR, Bangalore. He came to limelight when he composed and scored background music for a drama "Kathale Dari Doora" played by the National College's troupe in the Inter Colligate Drama Competition.

He launched 'Swara Milana', a light music troupe with two of his friends. He is a B-High for Akashvani music composer.

Under his directorship an audio-cassette, 'Bhavayana' was released in February this year.

M.S. Ramprasad
9/1A Krishna Road, Basavanagudi,
Bangalore 560004

A.P.Rao

741, 'Abhiman', 7th Cross
III Block, Koramangala
Bangalore 560034 ☎ 5532658

Academy Scholarships

Karnataka Sangeetha Nrithya Academy invites application from Mrudangam artists and Vocalists who have passed the vidwat grade examination, for a nine month practical training in classical music and dance from July 96.

Selected candidates between 25 and 45 years are entitled for a stipend.

For Application contact:
Registrar, Karnataka Sangeetha
Nritya Academy, 14/3 Canara Finance
Corporation Building, Nrupatunga
Road, Bangalore 560001

Shimoga Fetes Thitte Krishna Iyengar

An eight day festival of music and dance was organised by the Keertisesha B. Doreswamy Iyengar Trust at Shimoga from March 20, 96

Shankaran Nambudri gave excellent performance, ably supported by Mysore Dayakar (violin) and B.R. Sridhar (mrudangam). On the second day, a fine Bharatanatyam programme by Prathibha Prahlad was organised, which was appreciated. Prathibha, a leading Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi artiste has contributed a lot to the field of dance and music, through her "Prasiddha Foundation".

Thitte Krishna Iyengar, a 95 years old musician of Mysore, was honoured in the presence of music lovers. Sheshadri Gavai Ex Chairman of Karnataka Sangeetha Nruthya Academy was the chief guest.

Krishna Iyengar was presented with a garland, a shawl and a citation by the chairman of the trust, M. Bharadwaj. Later, Iyengar thrilled the audience with a vocal performance for two hours.

On the fourth day, a grand vocal recital by Unnikrishnan was presented, assisted by G. Chandra Mouli (violin), J. Vaidyanathan (mrudangam) and B.S. Purushotham (kanjira).

On the fifth day Vijay Siva gave a vocal recital, assisted by G. Chandra Mouli (violin) J. Vaidyanathan (mrudangam) and B.S. Purushotham (kanjira)

On Monday, March 25, S. Soumya of Madras gave an excellent vocal recital with her sweet and melodious voice. She was ably assisted by Ganesh Prasad (violin) and Sainath on (mrudangam). On March 26, Naiveli Santhana-gopalan in his recital was in his elements.

The festival concluded with Sanjay Subramanyam's vocal assisted by Vittal Ramamurthy (violin) and Naiveli Narayanan (mrudangam).

This unique day festival attracted a large number of local music lovers and those of adjoining Malnad district.

M. Bharadwaj

Subscribe to **PHOENIX**

a monthly on Music and Dance

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00

Three Years : Rs 140-00

It reaches you by post every month

PHOENIX

138 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009 ☎ 2263696
(Cheques should be drawn on "PHOENIX")

LAKSHMI JEWELLERY COMPANY

Manufacturing Jewellers for over 55 years

Dealers in:

Precious and Semi Precious Stones

Manufacturers of:

Shields, Trophies, Lapel Badges and Medals

LAKSHMI JEWELLERY COMPANY

NAGARTHPET, BANGALORE 560002

© 2212635 Estd 1940

Vaishnavi
RANGE
with Designers Tussles

Radhakrishna
Silks & Crepes

Choice of over
50 Designs
to choose

Manufactured and Marketed by :
Radhakrishna & Co.
Bangalore 560 002
Phone: 2213748, 2241567

Available in all
leading Stores in
India and abroad

OPTION

Phoenix

June 96

Rs 5-00

JOURNAL ON MUSIC & DANCE



LAKSHMI JEWELLERY COMPANY

Manufacturing Jewellers for over 55 years

Dealers in:

Precious and Semi Precious Stones

Manufacturers of:

Shields, Trophies, Lapel Badges and Medals

LAKSHMI JEWELLERY COMPANY

NAGARTHPET, BANGALORE 560002

© 2212635 Estd 1940



PHOENIX

Journal on Music and Dance

Vol 1

June 1996

No 8

S.N.Chandrasekhar

67 Basappa Layout
Bangalore 560019 © 6675758
Editor

N.Sundarraaj

138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009 © 2263696
Managing Editor

B. Rajashekar

© 2216459
Advertising Manager

Representatives

Ganapathi Bhat

Hubli -Dharwar

K. Ramamurthy Rao

Mysore

Geeta Raja

9 Chhaya, Jam-e-Jamshed Road

Matunga, Bombay 400019

© 412 2074

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00**Three Years: Rs 140-00***Please send all remittances to***PHOENIX**

The Circulation Manager

138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar

Bangalore 560009 © 2263696

(Cheques to be drawn on
'PHOENIX')

RN 45468/87

4

Readers' Write

5

Self Audition

6

Tuneful Encounters

7

Calling AIR

10

Prathibha's Rise to Prasiddha

12

A Visit to Kumar Gandharva

14

At the Heart of All Arts

15

Kathak in North Karnataka

17

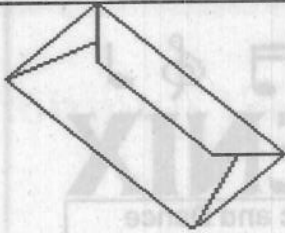
Cassettes Causerie

18

Know Your Artists

Cover Photo by:

Dhiraj Chawda



Readers Write

"Phoenix" is very informative, educative and thought provoking. All the articles are noteworthy. It is a well balanced magazine for lovers of classical music and dance.

The write up on 'MDR' was extremely good. You have rightly pointed out the 'quality' in his music and his nobility as an individual.

*M.D.Rajamani
Calicut*

THE MRIDANGAM SANG

APROPOS to the article "The Mridangam Sang" appearing in the HINDU of 15.3.1996.

Nobody who listened to Palghat Mani Iyer and Palani Subramania Pillai can deny the pride of place the duo uniformly enjoyed throughout their professional career. These two stalwarts were regular sidemen to the giants of the golden era" - to wit, Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer, Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar, Ariyakkudi, Alathoor Brothers, Semmangudi, GNB and Mudurai Mani Iyer etc. To use a cricketing parlance, if one was Don Bradman, the other was Garfield Sobers.

Both of them belonged to an enviable sishya papampara. The duo enjoyed the goodwill and blessings of Maha Vidwan, Pudukottai Dakshinamurthi Pillai, who was quick enough to spot the innate talent in them. Subramanya Pillai died in May 1962 and Mani Iyer in May 1981. With the passing away of GNB and Alathoor Sivasubramania Iyer in 1965 and Madurai Mani Iyer in 1968, the music scene took a sea-change. The Cutchery format gradually took a turn

after 1970 and Mani Iyer ran out of partners.

The proliferation of Sangeetha Sabhas and a steady increase of upcoming vocalists, violinists and mridangists witnessed a plethora of music concerts. While these may have attained proficiency enough to give concerts, it is doubtful if they have attained complete mastery in their chosen profession.

Both Mani Iyer and Subramanya Pillai had their own distinctive and individual style of handling the mridangam. (That they played even three Thani Avarthanams in a concert in those days is a different matter). There was both prose and poetry, besides "Sunaadham" in their Sollukkattus, which had a liberal admixture of grammatical Vallinam and Mellinam. Of course, one cannot expect to turn the clock back. But aspiring artistes who nourish ambitions to attain the level of excellence of these giants should find time to listen to present day senior vidwans like T.K. Murthi, Palghat Raghu, Sivaraman, V. Ramabhadran, Tiruchi Sankaran and Karaikkudi Mani, All of whom, remember Mani Iyer and Subramanya Pillai even to this day. Such was the indelible impression the DUO had left. Nothing helps better than "KELVI GNANAM".

In his commentary on the BHAGAVADDGITA, Adi Sankara has emphasised the need of learning Vidhyas as handed down by the successive gurus in their original and accepted standards. Likewise, Mani Iyer also stressed the importance of absorbing the original texts and not to make any in roads.

Both of them were conscious of the fact that they were only sidemen and in the exalted company of violinists of the stature of Chowdiah, Rajamanickam Pillai, Papa KS Venkataramaiah, Mayavaram Govindaraja Pillai and in later years, T.N.Krishnan and Lalgudi Jayaraman, they at once made the concerts both enjoyable and pleasing. Such was the team work that they maintained with all the vocalists, violinists and LAYA Vidwans.

Very few know that the eminent Scientist, SIR C.V. Raman did the signal honour of inviting Palghat Mani Iyer to his Laboratory in Bangalore to study the effects of Sound on Water.

S.Rajagopalan, Madras

India Foundation for the Arts

The India Foundation for the Arts (IFA), an independent, professionally managed grand making institution announces its second grant-making initiative in the area of arts collaboration and seeks assistance in the dissemination of this announcement to individuals and institutions who may wish to apply.

Applications can be had from The Foundation for the Arts, Tharangini, 12th Cross, Raj Mahal Vilas Extension, Bangalore 560080 ☎ 331 0584.

Next Issue

Cover Story, Veena Maestro V. Doreswamy Iyengar.

Report on 15th Taalavaadyo-
thsava '96 and Ankura.

Calling AIR and Know Your
Artistes.

Editorial

Self Audition

The AIR which incidentally is celebrating its golden jubilee, in the recent past, has been broadcasting some music programmes, both vocal and instrumental, which could do credit neither to the national forum nor to the artistes themselves. Some of these were in prime slots, though the musical standard itself was so abysmally poor that the artistes concerned could hardly be categorised in the lowest rung. What is inexplicable is that these artistes should have managed to outwit the normally uncompromising standards of the audition board. The panels comprise members who are known to be exacting in their judgment, sticking to rigid norms. Often times they end up with nil results. Nor do the authorities object to such a dour prospect, keen as they are in maintaining a standard. Under the circumstances it is baffling how such casual if not amateurish stuff makes the grade.

If this is the case with some over-enthusiastic artistes of the present generation, there are a few in the tested older generation who are guilty of depleting standards. For most of them, their best is far behind them-slackened due to sheer ravages of old age or languishing due to setbacks in health. A few of them may have become complacent. In any case, when their music goes over the AIR, it is a pathetic presence, certainly not fair to an avid listener. People who are not aware of their achievements in the field may even form wrong or unfair opinion of their potential. Such conclusions about at least some of them may be unjustifiable, but irredeemable.

The authorities in the AIR are not totally unaware of such goings on.

But they are not empowered to discontinue the bookings for such artistes of proven discount. The procedure is not free from hassles. But they may suggest to the artiste that all is not well with her/his music. Or indirectly hint that their services would be more useful for features where it is their knowledge rather than the voice or the instrumental fidelity that counts. In fact, some senior artistes have thoughtfully resigned themselves to such a proposition with rewarding results.

But the best option is for the artistes is to impose a kind of self Audition on themselves. Such a step could indeed be a panacea!

S.N.Chandrasekhar



R.S. Ramakanth

Next night (April 20, 10 pm) brought on the air a worthy old recording of R.K. Srikantan's familiar music in full fettle. Its melodic grace was enhanced by the presence of M. Chandrasekharan's violin and Umayalapuram Sivaraman's mridangam support. The lovely alaps for Vachaspati and Kalyani augured nostalgic memories of the master's touch of class. Especially memorable was the rendition of Kalyani, embellished by the vocalised flashes of Chandrasekharan's violin. Nagavalli Nagaraj, next morning (8-30 am) was sensitive when she started with Gamganapate (Hamsadhvani). The resonance in her voice enlivened Shanmukhapriya (Marivere) revealing depth of technique and imagination.

Much has already been said of the Gottuvadyam recital of Usha Ramamurthy (April 27, 10-10 am). It beats one hollow how she made it to the prime slot on a Sunday. In comparison, even a not-too exciting violin solo of K.V. Raja Iyengar (April 22, 8-30 am) was a big relief. His alap for Shankarabharana did not offer much by way of aesthetic fervour, but the kriti Edutanilachite was not short of its lyrical endearments. Sakalagraha (Athana) was as pleasing for its melodic flourishes.

A.P. Sarvottam in his flute recital (April 24, 8-30 am) showed promise. His Charukeshi at once testified to his smooth blowing. His tone is soft, though the 'sangatis' were not honed to match the melodic content.

M.D. Ramanathan was verily a musicians' musician. His was an inimitable style. If the 'gharana' concept had any relevance to the Carnatic style, his name would have certainly adorned one such. A glimpse of that hallowed memory could be had in a recording from Madras (April 27, 8-30 am). The numbers like Kedara (Samayamide), Madhyamavati (Ramakatha) and Anandabhairavi (O Jagadamba) were among his favourites, each testifying to an individual style that blended raga-bhava and lyricism most appealingly. It was soulful music.

Sriranjani (Parvatharajakumari) gave R.S. Ramakanth, one of the few of our young talents, a steady start. But neither Pantuvarali nor Charukeshi that followed was free from shortcomings. His 'sruti' couldn't be faulted. Yet it was by no means one of his best efforts. A honed, mellifluous voice was the mainstay in Sita Narayan's vocal recital for the National programmed later that night. The crisp Saranga varnam and



M. Nagaraj

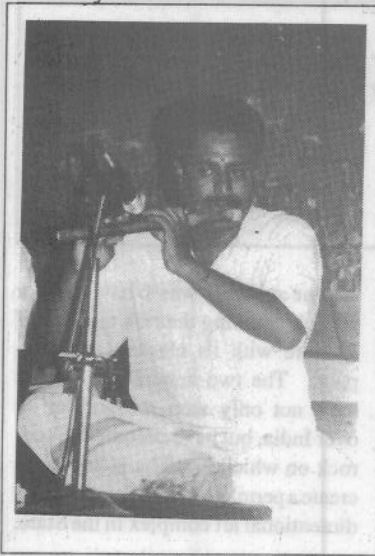


Seethalakshmi Venkateshan

Panchamatanga (Malahari) gave Sita a rollicking start. But once she drifted to her alap her failings became evident. Her delineation for Anandabhairavi (Marivere) and Kambodi (O Rangashayi) instantly betrayed her inadequacy in that major department. The standard was below par.

S. Srigandha's flute recital on the morrow (8-30 am) gave a good account of his steady progress. Whether it was the opening Goulipantu (Teratee) or detailed alap for Bhairavi (Koluvayya) his blowing was smooth and the euphony reassuring. Sitalakshmi Venkatesan, a senior vocalist (April 28, 10-10 am) was as consistent in the elucidation of her musical ideas as evidenced in her Bhajare (Malahari) and RamRaghu (Kapi). But the alap for Brindavana Saranga (Soundararajam) fell short in resonance, especially in the upper reaches, age having taken its toll on her vocal chords. Kharaharapriya, however, stood out for its modal fidelity, the Purandara Dasa pada going well for its lyrical appeal.

There was a breath of fresh air in the South Zone hook-up that same night (10 pm). The vocalist was V. Kalavathi, perhaps one of the youngest featured in that prestigious slot.



S.Srigandha

And she justified it with all her fervour. With a pliant voice that is honed to 'sruti', the senior student of the late Anoor Ramakrishna made an impressive beginning with Nee Chittamu (Veera-Vasantha). It was a confident start. The evocation in Madhyamavati (Nadupai) was more enduring, together with the detailed alap for Shankarabharana (Sri Dakshminamurthe) revealing a maturity much above her tender age. It was good music testifying to good grounding and sincere application. That should take her places.

The veena solo by Geeta Ramanand (April 29, 8-30 am) was as edifying for its spell of quietude that go well with a raga like Varali. Later at 9-30 am it was another artiste whose sights are aimed at profundity. Uma Gopaldaswamy revels in coming out with some infrequent melodies. But this time it was the common place Saveri (Etunammi) and Shankarabharana. The latter showed her in her elements, the detailed alap revealing an equation of her own. The kriti (Bhakti Bhikshe) was not wanting in its lyrical appeal, but the 'swaraprasthara' proved inconsequential. R.A. Ramamani is not one to yield to flamboyance. She is almost severe with her alap as evi-

denced in Pantuvarali (May 1, 8-30 am). It was a wholesome treat, the kriti Raghuvara standing out for its range and skill in improvisation.

At 9-30 am same day, it was another staff artiste, Geetha Shamprakash on the veena. Her Poorvi Kalyani (MeenakshiMe) was replete with endearing 'sangatis', the structural development, the style of phrasing and the use of 'gamakas' in the kriti strictly adhering to a time-honoured tradition. But H.K. Narayana, a seasoned broadcaster, could not rise to expectation (May 1, 9-30 pm). No doubt, the familiar pieces in Abhogi and Khamas had their modal fidelity. But the rare piece Matangeem in Ramamanohari could hardly provide aesthetic excitement. It was far from satisfactory, to say the least. The violin solo of Mysore Nagaraj (May 3, 8-30 am) stood out for its flourish. Whether it is the opening familiar Goudmalhar piece Sarasamukhi or the robust Kalyani (Pankaja Lochane), it is there to see how his sensitivity of alap and tautness in the treatment of the kritis, have blossomed into an original force, as it were. Padma Gurudutt (9-15 am the same day) is also as consistent. Her Kedara piece testified to her sincere approach, though the 'swaraprasthara' dragged a little. But



Uma Gopaldaswamy

her essay in Shubhapantuvarali was in poor shape. She sounded awfully out of form.

As a contrast Jambu Kannan (May 4, 8-30 am) was in fine fettle. Her Poorvi-Kalyani was so neat that it almost appeared like listening to a replay of some forgotten musical moods. As elevating was T.S. Rama's Madhyamavati (Vinayukuni) next day at 8-30 am. Her voice has a nostalgic fervour with an enduring quality. As professional was the approach of K.G. Kanakalakshmi (May 7, 8-30 am). Her music is consistently tuneful, her Dharmavati (Bhajare) not being different. There is indeed a measured feel in her rendition - be it the alap or the words. ■

ESSENCE

Music Competition

The Bangalore Gayana Samaja invites application from young musicians for its 28th Annual Music Competitions to be held in August / September 1996. Application forms can be had from its office on K.R. Road, Bangalore 560004 before July 22, 96.

Agenda for July

Bangalore Gayana Samaja

July 14, 96 (Sunday)

Sukanya Prabhakar (vocal) S. Jyotsana (violin) and T.S. Chandrashekhar (mridangam).

July 27, 96 (Saturday)

Trichy Rockfort Music Festival.

Attention Organisers

Music and dance institutions are requested to send their programmes to the Editor, PHOENIX, 138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009, before the first week of every month.

Pratibha's Rise to PRASIDDHA

S.N. Chandrasekhar

When one thinks of some of our performing artists themselves setting up organisations to sponsor programmes in their chosen field, he cannot help feeling a sense of indebtedness to them for their spirit of service. True, some sceptics see in such enterprise a motive that is purely personal.

But if one considers the larger interest of art that has gone into the festivals that are being organised by institutions like Nupura (it is an unmitigated pity that its pioneering Nitya Nritya was cutshort due to sheer lack of patronage), Kinkini, Tarangini and the Pradhan Dance Centre, it will be easy to perceive that such comments are uncharitable. In fact, each one of the foregoing organisations has enlarged the scope of its festival to throw open opportunities not only to deserving local talent, but also to a wide spectrum of reputed artists from all over the country. If in the bargain, the sponsor also uses the forum to exhibit his or her talent one will have to be generous to concede that charity begins at home!

Pratibha Prahallad's Prasiddha

Foundation, launched less than 10 years ago, has set before itself more ambitious objectives than many others in that type of set-up. Firstly, it went about involving in its ambit both music and dance, the founder's known predilection for the Hindustani style of music manifest in the agenda of its festivals.

Secondly, the foundation didn't

the one at Hampi was to have a wider appeal, clubbing the rich tapestry of folklore with its classical counterparts. The two annual gala events have not only won recognition all over India, but have become the bedrock on which Pratibha is hoping to create a permanent edifice for a multi-dimensional art complex in the State.

Given the drive, tireless energy and the plentitude of resources Pratibha has been able to garner, there is little doubt that her wondrous dream will become a reality in the not too distant a future.

The successful manner in which Pratibha negotiated with the Indian Railways to get a 25 percent concession (50 percent in I class travel) for artists itself is an eloquent testimony for her persuasive powers.

Avinash Pasricha That is an area where efforts had been made on several fronts, including some State academies in vain. Pratibha's efforts were an instant success, much to the delight of the artistic fraternity.

Pratibha's presence as a dancer compares admirably with her proven organisational abilities. She is undoubtedly one of our foremost



want to restrict its activities to the City alone. Even as Pratibha had finalised her plans for the first Sharad Vaibhava festival in Bangalore, she was getting ready with the format for a massive Vijayotsav in Hampi, the set of the never-to-be forgotten reign of the legendary Krishnadeva Raya. While the former catered to the urban elite, confining itself to the classical forms in their different perspectives,

dancers, having made a mark both in Bharathanatyam and Kuchipudi. She has a distinguished academic background to boot, acquiring a master's degree in mass communications of the Bangalore University. Her topic for the dissertation (Treatment of Dance in Indian Cinema) itself shows her penchant for the art.

Pratibha's dance itself has an immediate appeal. Whether it is the simple structure of Kuchipudi or the high degree of sophistication in the complex Adavu patterns in Bharathanatyam, the personal presence she brings to bear on the import is delightful. Either way the movement flows into a mature form. The dance overall appears unrestrained, often tending to make one feel that she is glossing over some of the little details in the style.

But the ebullient abandon, the panache as it were, is unmistakable, leading to an optimum aesthetic point. Likewise, her face all the time keeps a meaningful expression, consistent without being rigid.

Pratibha's gradual rise to fame has been entirely due to her own efforts and talent. Right from the early days when she was being trained in the art of dance, Under the Krishna Raos, Pratibha had acquired a poise and confidence which are the assets of a serious dancer. Her short stint with the renowned Muthuswamy Pillai chiselled her style further, veteran Chinna Satyam's tutelege in Kuchipudi finally helping her to emerge as a refined artiste. Today the regularity of her programmes, spread all over the country and abroad over the yeas is a fitting testimony that her dancing has been striking many a chord among her audience.

The demand on her professional standing has taken Pratibha far and

wide. Besides regular expositions to fulfil local obligations. Pratibha has figured in prestigious festivals like the Khajuraho and Konarak festivals, Ustad Allauddin Khan (Maihar) and Durgalal Memorial festivals, Tansen Tyagaraja 'Samarohs' and the Osho International Commune. She has also

Dhiraj Chawda



danced for the Spirit of Freedom concerts. Her tours abroad have been as extensive, taking her to many important centres of culture in the USA, Canada, the UK, Thailand and the Philippines, Japan and Dubai.

Pratibha's first US jaunt was at the invitation of the University of California at San Jose. Besides performing for select audiences there, Pratibha taught specific topics relating to the origin and growth of performing arts to students in the Masters class in the Department of Dance Anthropology and Indology of the university. As significant was her recitals at the Vishwa Kannada Sammelan at Manchester (UK) in the same year 1987.

The most coveted honour she has

enjoyed is to be invited to dance at the Okayama International Dance Festival of Japan in 1993. Pratibha was the first classical dancer from India to be bestowed with that signal honour. As memorable is the Manila International Dance conference, Philippines in 1991. Pratibha was the only dancer from India to dance in that festival. She was also invited by a body of the United Nations Interim Committee for co-ordination of the Lower Mekong in Thailand (1990) to dance and to give lecture demonstrations.

On the academic side, Pratibha was an awardee of the Central Department of Culture to study the Devadasi system of dance in North Karnataka on a junior fellowship. She has many papers to her credit, written for seminars and for publications from time to time. They include articles written for newspapers and periodicals. Earlier, she was a TV critic for a newspaper and for a brief period worked as a Production Assistant for the Doordarshan, Bangalore. The TV serials like "Nupur", "Nectar in Stone" and "Sruti" have won popular acclaim.

Awards and titles have naturally come her way. Notable among them are the Singaramani of the Sur-Singar Parishad, Bombay, Orissa Cine Critics's Award, Natya Bharati of Virupaksha Vidyananya Mahapeetha, Hampi, and the Mahila Shiromani award for excellence in classical dance by the Shiromani Foundation, New Delhi.

All these achievements and contributions have given Pratibha a pride of place as one of the premier dancers of our State. It is an achievement one could be proud of, bringing credit both to her gurus and the land of her birth.

A Visit to Kumar Gandharva

S.N.Krishnaswamy

This visit to Indore was like a pilgrimage for me. It was a five-fold pilgrimage, a pancha yatra, as it were.

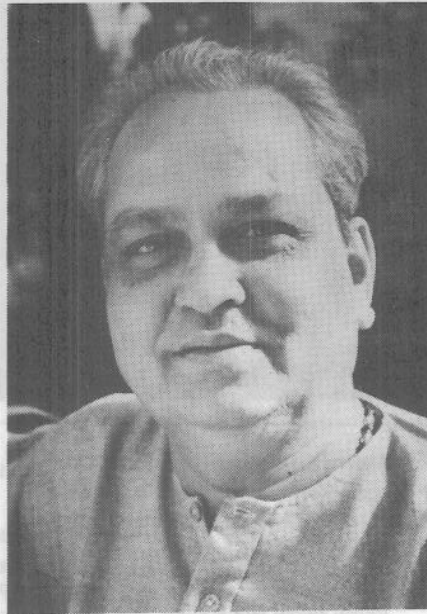
First on invitation I was in Kastur Ba Gram for a week. To me, it is a pilgrimage the National Institution set up to commemorate Kastur Ba, the great wife of Bapu.

The second reason was that I was to join my brother, Subba Rao, (Dr S.N. Subbarao, since the Kashi Vidya Pith conferred the honorary doctorate on him). While in Kasturba Gram, I would help Subba Rao make a cassette of National songs for use in his youth camp as well as in schools and colleges. This work was also like a pilgrimage for me.

The third pilgrimage was to the local Ramakrishna Ashram. T.N. Parthasarathi, an old friend who was the head of this Ashram had asked me to go there to conduct a couple of bhajan singing workshops. One for children and another for elders who already knew some singing. But I could visit the ashram and sing there, even if I may not conduct workshops. Parthasarathi gave me some bad news - he had just suffered a heart attack and since he could not spend much time with me, he would make all arrangements for my visit and for my bhajan session. So the third pilgrimage was also fulfilled. I did sing in the ashram, which made me happy and the group of devotees elevated by the bhajans.

The fourth pilgrimage was to Onkareshwar, a Jyothirlinga which is about 80 kms from Indore. I had visited Mahakaleshwar, another Jyothirlingam nearer to Indore earlier, on a visit to Bhopal with Subba Rao about 20 years ago. Parthasarathy made all arrangements for my travel, stay and visit to the temple. There it

My fifth and the most rewarding pilgrimage was a visit to Devas where the great Hindusthani vocalist, Kumar Gandharva spent last few years of his life. I had been wishing to go to his house for years. But now I had this opportunity, when he is no more with us except in spirit. He passed away last year.



I went to Devas with Eswar, my sister Uma's husband. That 30 km journey to Devas took only half an hour by bus. Devas is a quiet little town.

Kumar Gandharva's house, 'Bhanukula' is near the bus stand. The autorikshaw walla knew the house. The fine bungalow is inside a large compound full of trees and a garden. The doors were open. The door bell brought out a fair young woman who said, "I am Kalapini, daughter of Kumar Gandharva". When we introduced ourselves, she said, "Subba Raoji has written to us about your visit, so we were expecting you."

I asked her, "How is your mother?"

"She is well, she will join us. Please be seated".

She went in and returned with glasses of water, for it was noon and quite hot. Then Vasundhara Komkali came out, greeting us with folded hands. She has retained Kumar Gandharva's name, Shiva Putra Komkalimath, even though he is known by the name he was given by a wondering, admiring Maharashtra, when he bewitched them with his music even as a boy.

was the river Narmada that captured me. The river splits into two branches and reunites in a Sangam after flowing as two streams for two or three kilometers. A rocky island is enclosed by the two streams. Onkareshwar is located on a hill-top at the Eastern end of the island. It is just like Kaveri in Srirangapatnam or Srirangam. I felt most happy after a dip in the river.

Vasundharaji also said they had received Subba Rao's letter, but it arrived too late. They did not have time to reply to him. She asked about the recording he was planning. I was glad to tell her that we had a successful session in a studio in Indore, and Subba Rao had gone to Bombay with the spools to edit them for master cassettes.

Eswar told Kalapini, "We wanted some female voices to sing with us, we had some trouble getting a few young women to join us in the chorus."

Kalapini said "I would have been happy to join in the singing, if you had told me about it." We had never thought of it!

Vasundharaji took us inside to Kumarji's room. The room was large, but had little furniture. His bed was on side, along the wall. A life size bust of Kumarji smiled at us. Musical instruments were there, tabla and tanpura. The seats were in Indian fashion, on carpets with cushions to lean against.

I told her how I had been wanting to visit their home, for I considered myself a disciple of Kumar Gandharva, though he never taught me. For I learnt to sing many of his beautiful bhajans. I am like Ekalavya. I told Vasundharaji that I would like to have the two volumes of music that Kumarji wrote. She brought the copies. They were priced at Rs100-00 each. I paid her Rs 200-00. Eswar wanted a copy of Kumarji's photo. Kalapini brought two copies, one for me too, as her compliments.

Then I asked them if they could get the works of a song I heard on the AIR National Network during the bhajan sessions at 4-30 am one day.

"Which song?"

"Kashi sey aaya saari"

I asked her if she travelled a lot. She said, "By God's grace I do get programmes often. Recently I sang in

Bangalore. I was the guest of Mrs Eknath Kamath."

I said "I had heard about her programme, but was away at that time. I knew Mrs Kamath. Kumarji stayed with them whenever he visited Bangalore. The last time I attended his performance, I have heard him many times in Delhi, when I was there. Then he used to stay in Gandhi Peace Foundation, where I stayed in Subbarao's room or he stayed in Gandharva Maha Vidyalaya opposite Gandhi Peace Foundation. I had heard him once in Pune also.

Vasundhara remembered, "Subbarao visited us often in the past. Kumarji and he found delight in talking in Kannada. Subba Rao has not visited us recently. Please tell him that Thai is still there."

I told her that I will convey her message to him and he would find time to visit them and I would also like to come back to listen to the tapes of Kumarji.

Vasundharaji said, "I have a project to convert all the tapes to compact discs which last longer.

Will Karnataka come forward to finance these projects of Kumar Gandharva Academy of Music? For Kumar Gandharva is one of the greatest musicians born in Karnataka, though he migrated to Bombay and then settled down in Madhya Pradesh.

Should not the Government of India take the initiative in helping this Academy? Should not the Government and the people of Madhya Pradesh do something for this important work?

These were some of the thoughts that accured to me when I took leave of them. ■

Send your subscription to
The Circulation Manager

PHOENIX

138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar,
Bangalore 560009 by MO or
Cheque (favouring PHOENIX).

Devagiri Festival

Sri Devagiri Sangeetha Sabha, Bangalore got up series of music concerts to commemorate its tenth anniversary in May.

It started with a lively concert by S. Shankar on May 11, 96, accompanied by Balu Raghuram (violin), N. Vasudev (mridangam) and B.S. Purushotham (kanjira).

Subhashri V Ramachandran of Madras gave a placid concert on May 16. Harini and Sharada presented a pleasant vocal concert on May 17 followed by a neat flute recital by V.K. Raman. He was accompanied by Balu Raghuram (violin), A.V. Anand (mridangam) and R.A. Rajagopalan (ghatam). Kiran gave a veena concert on May 18 followed by a vocal concert by N.R. Prashant supported by M.S. Govindaswamy (violin), Ramesh (mridangam) and M.A. Krishna Murthy (ghatam).

On the concluding day, Rajkamal presented a flute recital followed by an impressive concert by T.V. Ramaprasad. M. Nagaraj (violin), Arjun Kumar (mridangam) and H.P. Ramachar (kanjira) supported him.

Rajaramanna, Chandrahasa Gupta, V.S. Krishna Iyer, Subhash Baharani, H. Kamalanath and G.N. Venkataraman were chief guests at the festival.

Dear Reader

Your comments and views are most valuable to us and the others too. We shall gladly publish the best. But, for maximum impact and better coverage, make them brief. Send your comments to: The Editor

IN LIGHTER VEIN

At the Heart of All Art

Manu Vijay

Rakesh Sharma said 'Sare Jahan se Achcha' when asked how India looked from outer space, and a whole nation took a deep breath and recorded the moment for posterity. India defeated Pakistan in the quarter finals of the World Cup, and Bangalore, and indeed the whole of a cricket crazy nation exploded in a frenzy of fireworks.

Sushmita Sen in a haze of tinsel and diamonds became India's first Miss Universe, and the country burst with pride. While it was neither you nor me who stood there, and experienced this moment of glory, we squared our shoulders, pulled up our collars and went to bed blissfully conscious of a feeling of achievement, pride and accomplishment.

The tide of sentiment and emotions that holds people in thrall, I believe, is what art is all about. Rakesh Sharma witnesses cosmic beauty, while Sen was grace personified. Cricket I think, has lyrical beauty all its own, and I have often held my breath at a Waqar Younis delivery or jumped off my seat at a flowing Sachin on-drive.

Societies and communities come together in the oneness of enjoyment to celebrate an aesthetic moment. Every face that witnesses, such an event is lit with a smile, and the peace and beauty of the moment warms the heart. This, I believe, is true Art and Aesthetics.

The late Pt. Durga Lal's scintillating performance at the Krishna Gana Sabha, Padma Subramanyam's

first exposition of Krishnaya Tubhyam Namaha in Bangalore many years ago, or the thrill of watching the great gurus Venkatalakshamma, Kelucharan Mahopatra and Nataraj Ramakrishna on one stage, were such ecstatic moments of time that remain imprinted in one's memory. A mean-

ingful verse sung melliflously, an item rendered with great joy and verve and a beautiful moment in time, space and light on stage, seldom leave a dry eye in the auditorium.

It is this ability to move, to touch the heart, to communicate and reach out to one and all irrespective of the barriers of language, race and religion that provides art an exalted place in the life-stream of a culture, and leaves one proud of being an Indian. It brings to mind the pleasure Bangalore felt when newspapers flashed the news that Doreswamy Iyengar received a standing ovation in Kremlin at the opening of Festival of India in Russia.

From Here and There

Rajiv to Play in UK Fest



The celebrated Sarod Maestro, Rajiv Taranth has received yet another international honour. He has been invited by the well-known organization 'Sargam' of London to play at its National Music festival in June this year.

Rajiv left for the concert tour in England recently the tour includes a performance at the prestigious Philharmonic Hall in the festival "Milap '96" at Liverpool.

A series of interviews with Taranath, one of the foremost musicians of India, includes the one with

the BBC on its popular show 'Kaleidoscope'. He is also scheduled to play for the Zee T.V. there.

Taranath will be back in the first week of July.

Bombay Beat

Shruti Sadolikar gave a Hindustani vocal recital at Dadar Matunga Cultural Centre accompanied by Vishwanath Shirodkar (tabla), Seema Shirodkar (harmonium) and Anant Kunte (sarangi).

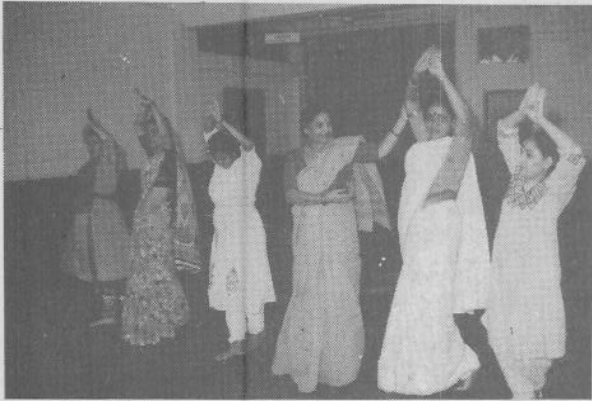
Ace Hindustani violinist N. Rajam gave a violin concert at the Indian Oil Sangeet Sabha, Bandra.

T.R. Padmini gave a vocal recital at Music Triangle, Santacruz accompanied by Kalpana Kishore (violin) and Nagai Narayan (mridangam).

A Three Day Summer Festival of Music was organised at Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha from April 27 to 29.

Geetha Raja

Towards a Solid Base for Kathak in North Karnataka



Maya Rao (third from right) arranging a pose in the Kathak workshop held at Dharwar

It is a well established fact that some of the exponents of Hindustani style of music hail from the Hubli Dharwar region, their disciples carrying the tradition forward with the same dedication to the Art. But, this cannot be said of Kathak, a sister-art of Hindustani music that has flourished in this region. At present the standard here is below par and in certain areas on the verge of deterioration.

This may be owing to the Gurus of Kathak migrating to bigger cities without leaving behind well-groomed disciples. Much concerned with this state of Kathak, the Natya Institute of Kathak and Choreography, Bangalore decided to hold Workshops for this dance style in different regions of North Karnataka.

The project proposed by B.V.K. Shastry was recommended to the Government for financial assistance and V.R.Kulkarni, former Director of the Directorate of Kannada and Culture accorded the grant. Maya Rao, the Director of Natya Institute, also a leading exponent of Kathak,

conducted a three-week workshop at Hubli, the first in the series.

Its primary aim was to create awareness for good training in Kathak amongst the dancers and gurus in the region. The workshop was unique as it was conducted on a two-level basis. While it was a refresher course for teachers it was also a performance oriented course for young dancers. The project attracted as many as 60 candidates. But the selection committee chose only 16. They were drawn from Hubli, Dharwar, Belgaum, Raichur, Bijapur etc, undergoing intensive course. They were introduced to the salient features of Kathak along with the nuances as

taught in the Lucknow and Jaipur Gharanas. Maya Rao was assisted by Chitra Venugopal, an exponent trained under Gurus Shambhu and Briju Maharaj.

The workshop was inaugurated by Padma Bhusan Gangubai Hangal, the celebrated vocalist. In her address, Maya Rao said that the need for good Kathak in North Karnataka was of vital concern to artistes there.

The valedictory function, presided over by B.V.K.Shastry, eminent art critic, was in the presence of the Commissioner of Police D.V. Guruprasad and Sharda M.Sirur, a Kathak enthusiast.

A colourful programme by the participants directed by Maya Rao was presented on the occasion to a packed audience, wherein the dancers from both the groups displayed clarity and good technique. An added attraction was a short recital of Kathak by Madhu Natraj with a fine portrayal for a Thumri and Tarana, testifying to the effective technique.

Correction

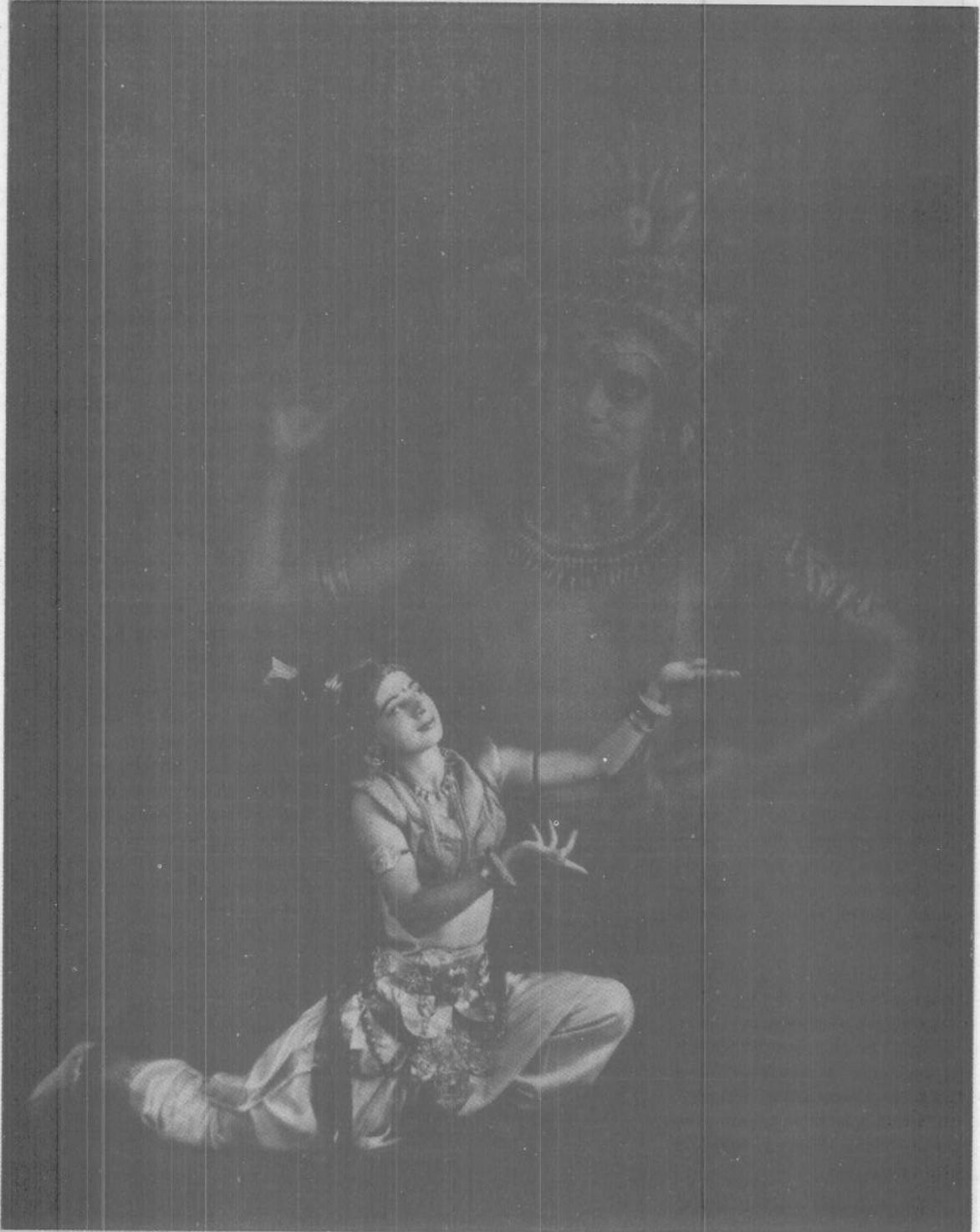
RMV Sangeetha Sabha, Bangalore will conduct music concerts on the Last Sundays of every month and not on the last Friday as mentioned in May 96 PHOENIX.

Editor

Subscribe to PHOENIX

The only monthly on Music and Dance from Karnataka which reaches you promptly every month

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00. Three Years: 140-00
(to be sent by MO or Cheque favouring "PHOENIX")
to The Circulation Manager, PHOENIX, 138 5th Cross,
Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009



Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00, Three Years: 140-00
(to be sent by MO or Cheque favouring "PHOENIX")
To The Circulation Manager, PHOENIX, 138 5th Cross,
Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009

Government for financial assistance
and V.R. Kulkarni, former Director
of the Department of Kannada and
Culture, awarded the grant. Mrs.
Rao, the Director of Naya Itihasa,
also a leading exponent of Kannada

Cassette



Causerie

PRATIBHA
vol. II
karnatic classical

V
O
C
A
L



V. Kalavathy

PRATIBHA-II by V. Kalavathy (Hombale Live Cassettes, HIC-435, Stereo), 952, 21st Main, BSK II Stage, Bangalore 560070 Rs 30-00)

Hombale Live Cassettes have done well to encourage a young artiste for their latest release under the suggestive title Prathibha-II. The cassette presents a choice selection of Carnatic classical aria, rendered evocatively by V. Kalavathi, one of our bright prospects.

The opening Ekadantam (Bilahari) itself ensures that her soft, melodious voice is in good fettle. A judicious use of 'gamakas' and an array of cascading 'birgas' lend a sensitive touch to the major numbers in the selection- Saveri (Enta Nerchina) and Madhyamavati (Nadupai Palukeru). The rendition in each case is enriched by crisp 'niravals' and meaningful 'swaraprasthara.

Kalavathi is flanked by equally competent accompanists like Nalina

Mohan on violin, Anoor Anantha-krishna Sharma on mridangam, Vyasa Vittala on khanjira and B.R. Rav-ikumar on the ghatam.

Overall, it makes for good listening.

Swaramilana

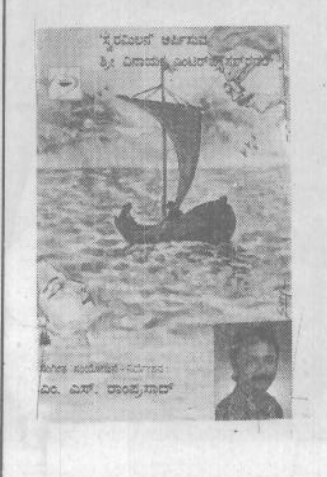
Bhavayana by M.S. Ramprasad (SM I/1B, 2/96 Stereo, Vinayaka Enterprises, 33/1 IV Main, Nehru Nagar, Bangalore 560020 Rs 35-00)

Swaramilana has introduced an interesting selection of Kannada lyrics under the title "Bhavayana". In his ambit, the young composer Ramaprasad covers a wide variety of Kannada verses by well-known poets whose names read like a veritable "Who's Who" of the Kannada literary world. The tunes, with their nearness to the classical mode, go well with the spirit of the words.

And with singers like Narasimha Nayak, G.V. Atri, Ratnamala, B.R. Chaya, Archana Udupa, Anupama and the 'Arpana' group in charge of the vocal refrain, the impact is quite pleasing. The texture of the poetry finds its echo in the music, the two combining admirably as the song is vocalised.

An interesting fare.

SNC



Sree Guruvayurappan Bhajan Samaj Trust

Gokulashtami Celebrations

Venue: Odukkathur Mutt (near Ulsoor lake)
Aug 17 to Sep 8, 96

Programme (6-00 pm)

- August 17
K.S.Gopalakrishnan (flute)
- August 18
Kadri Gopalnath (saxophone)
- August 19
Karaikudi R Mani (Thani Avarthanam)
- 7-00 pm-Balaji Shankar (vocal)
- August 20
V. Rajkumar Bharathi (vocal)
- August 21
Sudha Raghunathan (vocal)
- August 22
O.S. Thiagarajan (vocal).
- August 23
Nedanuri Krishnamurthy (vocal)
- August 24
U.Srinivas (mandolin)
- August 25
D.Seshachari & D Raghavachari
- August 26
C.Saroja & C.Lalitha (vocal)
- August 27
T.V. Shankaranarayan (vocal)
- August 28
Neyveli Santhanagopalan (vocal)
- August 29
Trichur V. Ramachandran (vocal)

ALL ARE WELCOME

Subscribe to

PHOENIX

It reaches you by post every month

Know your Artistes

Balu Raghuram



Balu Raghuram

Balu Raghuram (22), violinist, learnt violin from S. Chandrashekar. Later he was guided by the leading vocalist, Neela Ramagopal and violinist A. Sundaresan. Now violin maestro T.N. Krishnan is teaching him.

Balu is the recipient of 'Talent Search Scholarship' of the Centre for Cultural Resource and Training, Government of India.

A student of Natinal College, Bangalore, Balu made his debut in 1989 at Sri Krishna Gana Sabha and he has never looked back. He has built up his violin accompaniment career and is now a sought after artiste.

He has played to many leading vidwans of Bangalore, Madras and Bombay. and has participated in many music festivals conducted by the Government of Karnataka, Department of Tourism, Zonal Cultural Centre, Tanjore and Nagpur. He was adjudged the best accompanist by the Bangalore Gayana Samaja in 1991 and 1992. He has won the best violinist award in the AIR Music Competition in 1992. Next year he won the

Parur Sundaram Iyer endowment award in Sri Krishna Gana Sabha, Madras and Tamil Isai Sangam awarded the Lalgudi Gopala Iyer memorial award. He also won the best accompanist award of the Karnataka Ganakala Parishat this year.

Balu is a "B High" grade artiste of the AIR. A sincere and dedicated artiste, Balu Raghuram is all set for a bright career.

Balu Raghuram
'Bilahari', 80/1 Old Post Office Road,
II Block, Thyagarajanagar,
Bangalore 560028 ☎ 619973

Ullur Girdhar Udupa

Young ghatam artistes, master Ullur Girdhar Udupa (16) is the son of mridangam vidwan Nagendra Udupa.

He learnt ghatam and playing from his father from his very early age and has become an accomplished ghatam and mridangam artistes.

A first year PUC student from the



Vijaya junior C college, Girdhar has secured III rank in junior percussive examination by the Government of Karnataka.

Girdhar who is performing on ghatam since his 12 years has accompanied many famous artistes like Trichur Mohan, M.T. Rajakesari, V.S. Rajagopal, N. Vasudev, Vasudeva Rao Mohite.

Number of leading sabhas of South India have provided opportunity to exhibit his talent. He has featured in more than 500 concerts.

He has bagged first prize in percussion competition by The Bangalore Gayana Samaja in 1992. He has received the Yuva Prathistana Award and first prize in inter varsity cultural festivals. He has won appreciation from critics and music knowledgeable audience when he performed at the National Children's Festival 1995 at Bangalore.

Young Girdhar Udupa is a promising artiste who will establish himself as a celebrated ghatam artiste of Carnatic music in the years to come.

Ullur Girdhar Udupa,
87, 5th Main Road, III Block, T Nagar,
Bangalore 560028

Dear Reader

Your comments and views are most valuable to us and the others too. We shall gladly publish the best. But, for maximum impact and early coverage, make them brief. Send your comments to:

The Editor
PHOENIX
138, 5th Cross
Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009

While setting your jewellery with
fine quality

American Diamonds

Ask only for

Kumar Gems

Pioneers in the field of synthetic diamonds for
over two decades

Kumar Gems

SriLakshmi Vittobha Complex, 160 Big Bazar,
Tiruchirapally 620008 © 31359



Vaishnavi
RANGE
with Designers Tussles

Silks & Crepes

Choice of over
50 Designs
to choose

Manufactured and Marketed by :
Radhakrishna & Co.
Bangalore 560 002
Phone: 2213748, 2241567

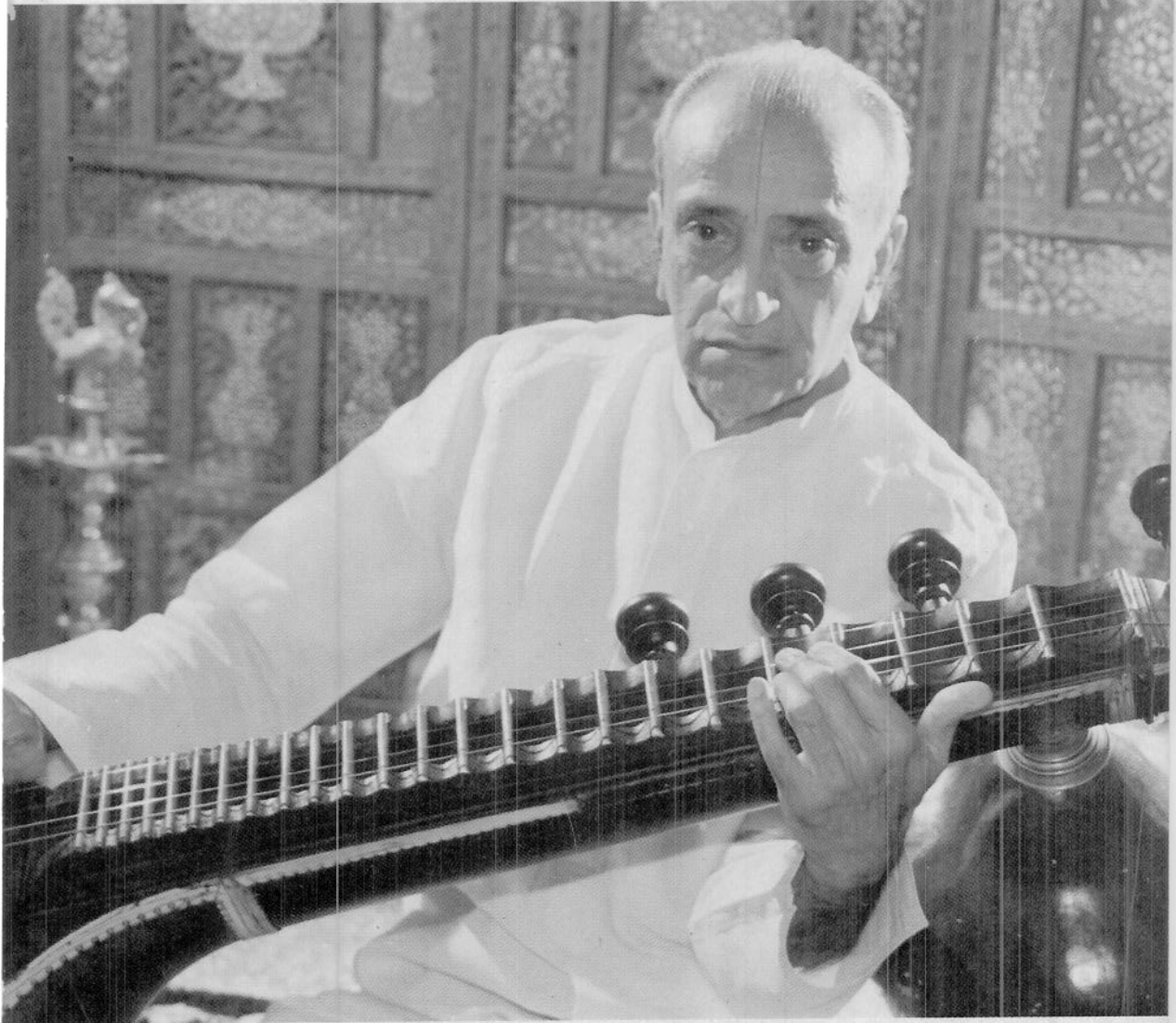
Available in all
leading Stores in
India and abroad

OPTION

Phoenix

Rs 5-00

July - August 96



JOURNAL ON MUSIC & DANCE

While setting your jewellery with
fine quality

American Diamonds

Ask only for

Kumar Gems

Pioneers in the field of synthetic diamonds for
over two decades

Kumar Gems

SriLakshmi Vittobha Complex, 160 Big Bazar,
Tiruchirapally 620008 © 31359



PHOENIX

Journal on Music and Dance

S.N.Chandrasekhar
67 Basappa Layout
Bangalore 560019 © 6675758
Editor

Bangalore K Venkatram
183, 8th Cross, II Bl, Jayanagar
Bangalore 560011 © 6630079
Associate Editor

N.Sundarraaj
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009 © 2263696
Managing Editor

B. Rajashekar
© 2216459
Advertising Manager

Representatives

Ganapathi Bhat

Hubli -Dharwar

K. Ramamurthy Rao

Mysore

Geeta Raja

9 Chhaya, Jam-e-Jamshed Road

Matunga, Bombay 400019

© 412 2074

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00
Three Years: Rs 140-00

Please send all remittances to
PHOENIX

The Circulation Manager

138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar

Bangalore 560009 © 2263696

(Cheques to be drawn on

'PHOENIX')

RN 45468/87

Vol 1

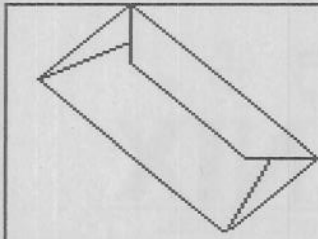
July - August 1996

No9

Contents

4	Readers' Write
5	Editorial-Towards Excellence
6	Calling AIR
11	15th Taalavadyotsava 96
15	Mysore Bani Veena
18	Smitha Iyengar
20	AIR Turns Visual
21	Bhoop or Deskar
22	From Here and There
24	Mid Season Music Marvel
25	Taala Tarangini
28	Nayikas - Then and Now
29	Lords of Strings
30	Contributions of Haridasa to Music

Cover Photo by
N.SUNDARRAJ



READERS Write

I am deeply impressed to read your article. M.S. the Living Legend. The title is most apt. The contents attract the reader by choice words. The image of DVG dancing in raptures before MS remains ever green in mind.

*H.N.Rajanna
Bhadravathi*

M.S. SUBBULAKSHMI

It is really unfortunate that our Government (Central) has not conferred country's highest on 'M.S.'. As I know, that there was some technical difficulty in awarding 'Bharath Rathna' and now I am told the way is clear, after the Supreme Court dismissed the petition filed before it, against awarding titles.

If one attempts to write about M.S.'s achievements, her contribution to Music and also for charitable purposes, it amounts carrying coal to New Castle. M.S. is in the evening of her life and fortunately her husband is also alive.

It is also strange and surprising that hundreds of Music Sabhas all over the country have so far not pressed our government about the award.

Will the Music Sabhas and personalities in Music field and others wake-up?

*B. Visweswara Rao
Bangalore*

Many organisations in and around Bangalore are organising music festivals giving good opportunities for the listening public and the artistes themselves in propagating and encouraging classical music.

Some organisations fill the programmes with artistes from outside Karnataka. One such is at Odakathur Mutt wherein all the fourteen programmes are studded with outside artistes.

We are not against any artiste from any region participating in Bangalore. But under the garb of such celebrations, there should not be monopolies. Even among the accompanying artistes there are only 14 from this region while twice of them are outsiders.

Organisers should know that Karnataka has quite a number of renowned, artistes. It is time that organisations like Ganakala Parishat and even the media take up such issues, so that classical music becomes more popular irrespective of language, region and such other bias.

*Anantharam
Bangalore*

I have gone through few numbers of your journal on music and dance, which is giving good coverage to the musicians, dance artistes and associated members of this faculty. The articles are of superb standard and highly informative. This part had been without such a magazine and sans reportage of various cultural events going on from time to time.

May the journal raise up to the stature of high order enabling us to know the profile of the high status of performers in all fields.

Wishing it a grand success,

*S.V.R.Iyengar
Bangalore*

Obituary Srigandha

Srigandha, flutist died on August 4, 96 at Bangalore. He was 25.

Srigandha gave his first performance in 1984 and had won the award in the competition by Bangalore Gayana Samaja. He was the recipient of the Karnataka Government Scholarship and Silver Flute award by the Madras Music Academy in 1994.

He had performed in a number of concerts in Karnataka and outside. He was a regular participant at the Thiruvayyaru festival.

Srigandha who was the student of M.R.Doreswamy of Bangalore was the son of N.Srinivasiah, a great lover of music and grand son of Somanatha Bhagavathar (of Yakshagana fame).

He was being guided by Lalgudi G.J ayaraman. He had recorded many cassettes which were well received.

With his sudden death Karnataka has lost a very talented flutist. Phoenix conveys its condolence to the bereaved family, and pray God to give enough strength to his parents to bear the loss.

Dear Reader

Your comments and views are most valuable to us and the others too. We shall gladly publish the best. But, for maximum impact and early coverage, make them brief.

Editorial

Towards Excellence in Dance

The city recently saw the birth of another Pratishtana, taking the name of Karnataka Nritya Kala Pratishtana as distinct from the Karnataka Nrityakala Parishath which has been in existence for over a decade now. The promoters of the new organisation, however, make it emphatically clear that theirs is no rival to the Parishath of which many of them are themselves ardent members.

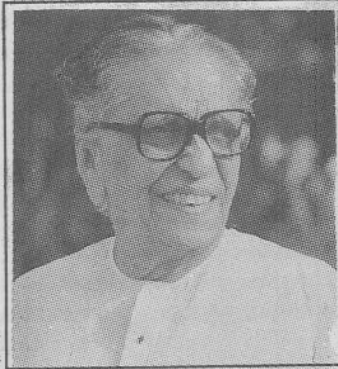
Then why this new venture of which some of our eminent gurus and senior dancers are promoters? The answer is simple. It is to preserve and promote what has come to be termed as the Mysore style of Bharathanatya. Which presupposes a separate entity to dance in this part of the country, though it bears the same nomenclature as that in Tamilnadu. And it is this contentious issue that is intriguing. True, ever since sage Bharata came out with his monumental treatise on dramaturgy, based on the tenets enunciated in it several dance styles have taken shape, each imbibing its own regional influence to emerge as distinct styles like Manipuri, Kathak, Odissi, Kuchipudi, Kathakali, Mohini Attam and last but not the least Bharathanatya, the last as applicable to the contiguous states of Karnataka and Tamilnadu.

For all practical purposes the style prevalent in the two states is very much the same. The principles governing Angika, Aaharya and Satwiks are identical. If there is a perceptible variation, it is only in the aspect of Vachika. In conformity with regional influences, the repertoire in Tamilnadu draws more on the lyrics in Tamil, but certainly not to the exclusion of other languages. "Krishna Nee Begane" itself is an eloquent testimony, the famous Padam popularised by none other than the doyenne Balasaraswati herself. Contrarily, there are very few lyrics in Kannada, especially the all-important Varnam, a factor which has dawned on some of our dancers suddenly, prompting them to make concerted efforts to produce some overnight. They have yet to yield results though. But it is true that dancers locally for long have depended mainly on lyrics in Telugu and Sanskrit, zealously excluding those in Tamil, though the attitude of late has become liberal.

What is intriguing to a discerning mind, however, is why this alienation in the field of fine arts. No doubt, as in most other parts of the country, Karnataka also had a dance form of its own. But few can vouch for its distinct character. It took a definite shape and form only after an inter-action with the Nattuvanars of the neighbouring State of Tamilnadu, which again nurtured its style with the influence of Bhagavata Mela. But so far as the other aspects, the differences are imperceptible. They are as negligible as it is between what has come to be referred to as the Pandanallur, Tanjore, Vazhuvoor, Kanjeevaram or the Kalakshetra variations. Overall, in all of them as it is in Mysore (Karnataka), there are more similarities than differences. Mainly, if Nritta is a wee bit weak in the Mysore variation, its Abhinaya is certainly more profound and ebullient.

The need of the hour is to see that there is greater coordination between dancers espousing the so-called different variations so as to assimilate the best in each so as to arrive at a plausible style that accounts for excellence. It should be the duty of all lovers of dance and dance organisations to work towards such an integration and that could be a more enduring contribution to the art than to stay isolated.

S.N.Chandrasekhar



CALLING AIR

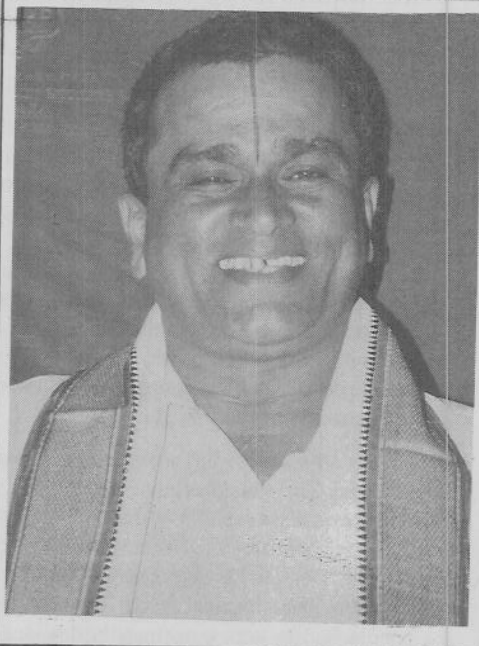
The interesting interview over the AIR of the popular ghatam artiste Sukanya Ramgopal (July 9) had something for musicians in general and those of her ilk in particular to gloat about.

As is well-known, these artistes and their sponsors alike have a grouse that audiences generally treat the percussion artistes with scant respect. The resentment justly is that listeners start moving out when the time comes for 'Thani Avarthanam'. The slot is invariably treated like an interval by many.

But Sukanya's experience is quite the contrary. That is so far as the audience in Canada and America go. In fact, that was the focus of the interview-audience behaviour. It speaks volumes for their aesthetic sensibilities that irrespective of their understanding capacity of the finer points of the art, they would sit through a concert.

And the concerts Sukanya was referring to were by our own M.S. Sheela. In her recent tour of the new world, Sukanya was in the company of Anoor Ananthadkrishna Sharma on the mridangam and Nalina Mohan on the violin. The foursome returned early in July.

As recounted in her interview, the concerts generally lasted for over four hours and the 'thani' every time generated as much appreciation as the vocal and violin turns. Obviously, the uncommon 'earthen pot' must have aroused the curiosity of listeners, especially the westerners. That does not mean un-



M.T. Shanmukharayana

derestimating the calibre of the two percussionists. That is indisputable. But it certainly means that they had the sense of proportion and took care to see that they didn't try the patience

of the audience as it often happens back home!

On the concert side, the spacious alap for Athana (Ilalo Pranatarthi) by Nagamani Srinath (May 10, 8-30 am) unfolded the same panacea that has been associated with her chaste style. If the alap was re-posedful, the krithi gracefully anchored to the structure to evoke some enduring 'sangatis'. The Dasarapada, Neenupekshemade (Udayaravichandrika) stood out for its lyrical sweetness.

Ease and clarity marked the concert of S. Shankar (May 13, 10-10 am). The opening Sidhivinayakam (Shanmukhapriya) itself revealed a soft, well-preserved voice. His alap for Bilahari (Paridana) and Kharaharapriya (Chittaratnamaya) were attractive with some lilting 'sancharas', the lucidly articulated 'sahitya' charmingly enhancing the 'raga bhava'. It was a re-assuring recital.

V.K. Raman's flute recital (May 15, 9-30 pm) was as absorbing. With steady blowing and unhurried tempo, Raman brought out a sprightly portrayal of some haunting melodies like Dwijavanti (Chetashri), and Goula (Sri Mahaganapatim). Ranjini (Durmargachara) received a leisurely airing, the charming way he invested the familiar kriti with glowing 'swaraprasthara' being an eloquent testimony to his competence. Shankarabharana (swararagasudha) was treated as daintily, melodising the salient



Sukanya Ramgopal

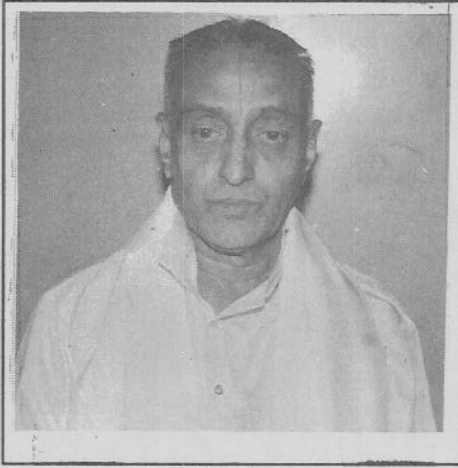
'sancharas' convincingly. The 'nirval' and 'swars' passages enhanced its aural overtones.

What a refreshing change was discernible in M.T. Shelvanarayana's recital on May 25! It was so different from the unfavourable impression he had made in his 'national' sometime ago. His Saveri (Shankaru Shankari) was replete with alluring 'sangatis', the fullness of 'sruti' testifying to his evocative style. One hopes he would keep up his application.

The unhurried grace in Sri Jalandhara (Gambhira-Nata) gave Suma Sudheendra's veena recital (May 25, 9-25 am) a lively start. Her alap for Charukeshi was as satisfying, the stress on the 'jiva swaras' giving it a distinct character. But the kriti was not as edifying, some unsavoury notes straying into the contour.

The South-Zone hook-up of Murali Krishna (May 27, 10 pm) was more disheartening. No doubt, Sri Saraswati (Arabhi) gave the youngster a flying start. But neither the Hamsanandi piece nor the stately Pakkalanilapadi (Kharaharapriya) could subscribe to a standard. The alap in either case, was sketchy, though the delineation of the kritis cannot be faulted. That was the saving grace.

One of the young violinists who has of late made a mark both as a soloist and accompanist is B.U. Ganesh Prasad. His Kalyani (May 28, 8-30 am) was notable for its soft bowing technique and steady fingering. The sketch of the raga was attractive, the kriti Birana standing out for its modal authenticity. Usha Kesari whose vocal followed at 9-30 am same day has a sweet voice, but needs a little more cultivation if it has to be honed to resonance. The Saranga piece Neevada gave her a fine start. But Saramati failed to live upto expectation, the lingering quality of the raga not fully coming alive.



V. Desikachar

V. Kalavathi who sang the next morning has already made a name for her consistency. But her Kirvani (Varamula) certainly could not do justice to it. The alap itself betrayed a feeble structure, the 'sancharas' straying away from the contour more than once. The rendition of kriti also left much to be desired, though her 'swara' forays were delectable. On the same day 9-30 am it was V.R. Vijayalakshmi who was on the AIR. She has a pleasant voice, but it sounds unhoneed to 'sruti'. What sustained the interest



Nagamani Srinath

was the unsullied imagery of Saranga, not a frequently heard raga.

B.S. Vijayaraghavan is a seasoned vocalist. But as he intoned Dhanyasi (June 2, 8-30 am), his voice seemed to tire out, a jaded feeling standing out in the presentation. But the two Kannada lyrics Echarikecharike in Hamsanandi and Tanu Ninnadu in Kedaragoula had all the endearments of 'raga bhava', without interfering in their lyrical interpretation. But Ambuja Narayan (June 3, 9-30 am) as she delineated Kirvani (Pranamami Sri) gave the impression of being indifferently to form. A florid 'bani' is discernible, but the interpretation lacks credibility.

D.N. Guru Dutt, same time next day, was no better. His alap for Bilahari (Sri Balasubramanyam) was passable. But in the rendition of the kriti, the 'swarasthara' went haywire. The singing was below par. But Rajalakshmi's veena recital (Mysore June 7, 8-30 am) was made for pleasant listening. She was sure of her fingering, aligned to a perfect 'sruti'.

Whether it was the opening Sowrashtira piece or the more detailed airing of Kirvani (Varamula), the portrayal underscored the sublime elegance of Carnatic music.

The sensitivity of the alap for Shankarabharana by R.S. Ramakanth (June 7, 9-15 am) almost blossomed into an original force as he unfolded the kriti Bhakti Bhiksha. The enunciation itself was in keeping with the spirit of the composition. The short pieces in Hamir-Kalyani and Mohana revealed an aural arrangement that could easily prompt aesthetic joy. But the South Zone hook-up by B.A. Narayana, a student of Nedanuri Krishnamurthy (June 6) could not rise above the pales of mediocrity. He has a facile voice, but he gives the impression of be-

ing in a hurry as evidenced in the Nata varnam and Abishta Varada (Hamsadhvani). His alap for Kalyana - Vasantha was more reposeful, the kriti Nadaloludai itself gaining in-depth due to a flurry of improvised 'swara' passages.

It was Kirvani again, but this time on the flute. The artiste was the seasoned S.A. Sashidhar (June 10, 8-30 am). The alap itself was neat and unhurried, the sure bowing technique making a pleasant impact. The structural development in the kriti, the style of phrasing and the use of meaningful 'gamakas' heightened the melodic grace in the playing. But Ratna Shivashankar who followed (9-30 am) sounded utterly out of form. Though the form in Mayamalavagoula (Viduluke) was unmistakable, her frequent slips in 'sruti' robbed the very mood in the rendition.

Nor could the veena recital of A.S.Padma speak for a standard above the routine. True, her Bhairavi (Sri Raghuvara) was tuneful, but lacked the pep to make it exciting. Her Shuddha Dhanyasi piece, however, revelled with some enduring 'sangatis'. Padma Narayanan's vocal (9-30 am) could not make a better impact. Her Begada (Abhimanamu) had a leisurely pace and Jayantasena (Vinatasuta) sounded authentic. But she was not sure of 'sruti'. That proved to be the villain of the piece!

The veena recital of T. Sharada (June 12, 8-30 am) was a treat. The concert started warming up with the almost forgotten Dhanyasi piece Shyamasundaranga. The sketch of the raga Ramapriya (Pari Pahimam) was more attractive, some alluring 'saicharas' enhancing its melodic overtones. A satisfying recital indeed. The violin solo by A. Veerabhadriah was as soulful, though not as steady. The alap for Pantuvarali was tidy, though not



A. Veerabhadriah

fully impactful. The delineation of the celebrated kriti Raghuvara bristled with some lilting layakari.

V. Desikachar's flute solo (9-30 pm, that night) had an old world charm



M.S. Vidya

about it. The Goula piece Pranamamyaham was followed by a trite composition in Ritigoula, characteristic in its structural elan. But it was Thodi that really lifted the aesthetic feel of the recital. The alap was subdued, but invested with the endearments associated with that time-tested melody. Emi Chesite, the familiar Thyagaiah kriti stood out for its tranquil mood. M. Nagaraj's inspiring violin support heightened the evocative overtones in the concert. Rajalakshmi Ramarao's vocal (June 14, 8-30) was just above the pedestrian level, though her voice has a lilt. Evarikai (Devamanohari) was disposed of without much hassles. But the alap for Kirvani betrayed slips in 'sruti'. The kriti Kaligiunte was also not free from lapses in 'sruti', the overall effect falling short of

resonance.

The South Zone hook-up on June 16 was no better in its fervour. Though the lilting Raja Raja (Niroшти) gave Radhika Bhasker's veena recital a sprightly start, her Shahana (Raghupate) was so abysmal in its modal fidelity that it left one wondering how she was able to make it to the prestigious slot. Even the unfailing Kadanakutuhala piece Raghuvamshasuda couldn't give a better account of her 'sadakam'.

D. Balakrishna's veena recital (June 17, 8-30 am) was in refreshing contrast. The very rollicking gait in Kannulara (Dhanyasi) made all the difference. The fullness in the sruti and the self-assurance as he intoned Madhyamavati helped in bringing out a sprightly portrayal of the raga, the kriti Nadupai redolent with some lingering 'swara' forays. A recital worthy of the tradition he upholds. Shaila Subramanyam (9-30 am same morning) has a refined style, as evidenced in the alap for Arabhi (O Rajeevaksha). But her voice is

shaky right through, betraying lack of application.

The same raga (Arabhi) gave M. Ramesh (June 18 9-30 am) a pleasant start. Chalagalla, the kriti revealed a steady voice, though could do with a sense of modulation. His alap for *Harikambodi* (Dinamanivamsha) was tidy, the rendition of the kriti itself not short of feeling. But the gravity and quietude one looks for in a seasoned singer still seems elusive. Lalita Prasad's vocal (June 19, 9-30 am) was nor better in this regard. Her Purvikalyani (Kashivishalakshi) was true to form, but her voice lacks modulation. Yet there is promise here for sure.

Saroja Natarajan's Harikambodi (June 20, 9-30) (Rama Nannu) was as flamboyant as ever, bristling with lightning 'swara' passages. But in an effort to show the range in her voice, she tends to strain in the upper reaches—often sounding squeaky. Her pieces in Chakravaka and Bhoul were impactful for their felicity of expression.

The alap for Shankarabharana by G.S. Kamala and G.S. Rajalakshmi (21, 8-30 am) was as authentic. Their facile voices combine well, their rendition attuned to the classical mode. The classic Akshayalinga was as dignified in its articulation, though the 'swaraprasthara' seemed unaccountably awry.

Sriranjini (Sogasuga) by Neela Ramanujam (June 22, 8-30 am) showed her in good fettle. A facile voice is her asset and she uses it well to explore the melodic reach of the raga. E.P.



G.S. Kamala and G.S. Rajalakshmi

Alamelu's veena recital (9-25, same day) was as evocative. If the Hamsadhvani piece showed a steady pace and clarity in the notes, her alap for Shahana was lucid in its elucidation, highlighting the jiva swaras, Rama Ikanannu received a leisurely airing, a sleek 'thanam' adjunct enhancing its sensitive touch.

T.S. Satyavati (June 24, 8-30 am) with the opening Vandeni (Hamsadhvani) itself showed that she was out to settle scores with her compeers. It was noteworthy for the depth she has acquired to her style. Her alap for Bilahari was more edifying, projecting the 'ragabhava' convincingly. Sri Balasubramanyam was a study in rhythmic rhapsody, her improvisation in the 'swaraprasthara' giving an idea of the breadth of her vision. It was a



Neela and Kunjumani

reassuring concert. M.K. Pranesh (June 26, 8-30 am) made as good an impression with a neat Latangi (Marivere). His subdued style has a sensitive appeal, especially the emphasis he lays on the 'sahitya'.

At 9-30 am it was M.S. Vidya who was on the air. She has a well-cultivated voice and she uses it intelligently to make her singing evocative. Her alap for Malayamaruta was neat and precise, the familiar kriti Manasa Etulo invested with a liberal array of 'sarvalaghu' swara forays. The Kuranji piece was as lovely in its lyrical appeal.

In her Hindustani vocal, Shanta Jayateertha (June 27, 8-30 am) chose a rare combination, Huseni-Thodi to regale the listeners. Shanta has an undoubtedly trained approach, chaste style at once casting an indelible impression. She has a melodious voice and sings methodically in keeping with the slow, measured feel of her personality!

It was the popular Sikkil Sisters, Neela and Kunjumani who were featured in the National Programme on June 29. Their flute duet is very popular, endowed as they are with a sound grounding and a wide repertoire. Nadupai, the Madhyamavati piece gave them a fine start. Neetimati (Srikanta) was as competent in its aural edifice. The piece de resistance was Mohana which was treated for a raga-thana and pallavi. It was negotiated in a traditional manner providing a field day for the percussionists.

ESSENCE



N.S.Krishna Murthy, retired Station Director, AIR releasing the souvenir at the 15th Talavadyothsasva 96. Others seated (from right) R.Vishweshwaran, A.R. Chandrahasa Gupta and M.A. Narasimhachar.

15th Talavadyothsava '96

N.Sundarraaj

The 15th Talavadyothsava '96, organised by the Percussive Arts Centre (PAC), Bangalore was inaugurated by A.R. Chandrahasa Gupta, IAS, Secretary, Kannada and Culture, Government of Karnataka on the evening of May 27, 1996, at Yavanika with the presentation of Palani Subramanya Pillai Award, with the title, Laya Kala Nipuna to veena maestro of Mysore, R. Visweshwaran. The award included a shawl, citation and cash of Rs 5000/-.

This award was donated by Sudha Rao and A.H. Rama Rao of Rama Sudha Charitable Trust.

N.S. Krishna Murthy, former sta-

tion director of AIR who released the souvenir commemorating the utsav, speaking on Subramanya Pillai, advised youngsters to follow the old timers. "Today it is monotony and too mechanical in music", he said and concluded by saying that all artistes have developed the habit of increasing the volume of the sound system forgetting the feelings of audience.

He praised Bangalore K Venkatram the kingpin of the festival for his yeoman service in the field of music and specially percussion and publication.

Vidwan M.A. Narasimhachar and mridanga vidwan T.A.S. Mani spoke on Visweshwaran. Earlier M. Surya Prasad welcomed the gathering and

introduced the dignitaries. Padma Gurudutt read the citation and V. Krishna presented a report on PAC. Ravi proposed a vote of thanks. The programme was conpered by Anasuya Kulkarni.

The inaugural function was followed by a veena concert by R. Visweshwaran accompanied by M.T. Rajakesari (mridanga) and M.A. Krishnamurthy (ghatam).

Laya Kala Nipuna

The H. Puttachar Memorial Award, donated by kanjira vidwan H.P. Ramachar and the title "Laya Kala Nipuna" was awarded to the mridanga vidwan M.T. Rajakesari on the evening of May 28, 96 by Nittoor



R. Visweshwaran receiving the award from A.R. Chandrhasa Gupta, Secretary, Kannada and Culture, Government of Karnataka

Srinivasa Rau, President of the PAC. This award is awarded for the artistes between 40 and 60 years and carries a cash award of Rs 2500-00.

A book, Tala Vadya Seminar II was released by S. Krishna Murthy, former station director of AIR. In his address, Krishna Murthy recalled the days when maharajas honoured vidwans and now the government is honouring artistes. "Musicians honouring another musician is something great and commands greater value", he said. Speaking very highly about the contents of the book, Krishna Murthy said that "whatever Bangalore Venkatram, editor of the book, does, is done in style".

Vidwans A. Veerabhadriah and A.V. Anand spoke on M.T. Rajakesari. B.K. Chandramouli read out the citation.

This was followed by H.C.K. Bhatta Memorial programme, a musical feature, 'Laya in Sugama Sangeetha' presented by S.Bali and participated by C. Aswath, Y.K. Muddukrishna, Ratnamala Prakash, Malathi Sharma, Raju Ananthaswamy, D.Devambu, Kashyap, N.S. Prasad

and N.S.Muralidhar.

Symposium on Chembai

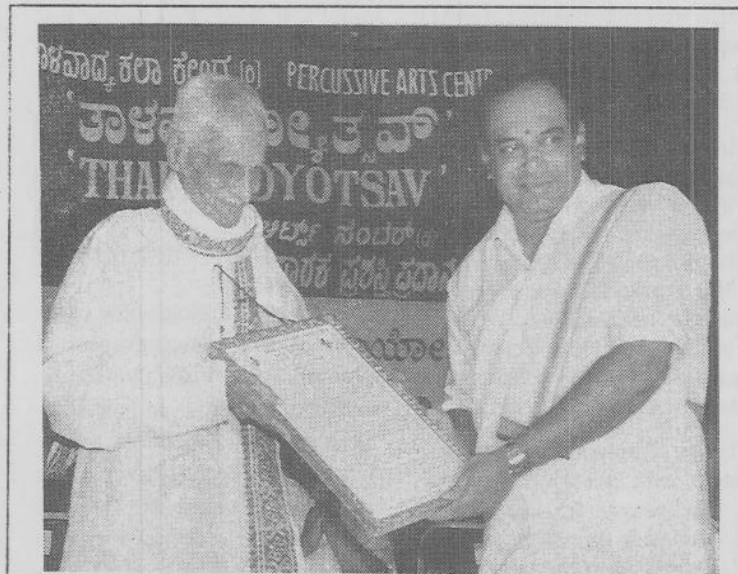
In the symposium on Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar Birth Centenary organised on May 29, Valayapatti S Malarvannan gave a Laya Vinyasa accompanied by

R.Yogaraj (mridangam) and Papanasam Sethuraman (kanjira).

N.Ramanathan, Head of the Department of Music, Madras University and B.M. Sundaram, noted musicalogist spoke on the personality and artistry of Chembai. V. Doreswamy Iyengar who chaired the session paid rich tributes to Chembai.

The day's programme concluded with the Laya Lahari, a percussion ensemble of Ayyanar College of Music, Bangalore with M.Venkatesh Achar in the lead.

At the symposium on Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Garland N. Rajagopalan, N. Ramanathan and B.M. Sundaram spoke on Maharaja-puram Viswanatha Iyer. Noted critic B.V.K. Sastry who had chaired the session narrated his acquaintance with the maestro. This was followed by the R.K. Srikantan Endowment programme, where Maharajapuram Srinivasan gave a vocal concert on the evening of May 30, 96 accompanied by M.S.Govindaswamy (violin), A.V. Anand (mridangam) and R.A. Rajagopaln (ghatam). This was sponsored by the Maharajapuram Trust.



Justice Nittoor Srinivasa Rao (left) presenting the award to M.T. Rajakesari.



Lalgudi G Jayaraman presenting the award to Gurusvayur Dorai

Mridanga Kala Siromani

Curtains of the festival came down on the evening of May 31, 96 with the presentation of the K. Putturao Memorial Palghat Mani Award, donated by K.K. Murthy, President of Academy of Music to vidwan Gurusvayur Dorai by the violin maestro Lalgudi G Jayaraman at the Chowdiah Memorial Hall. This included a shawl, citation and cash of Rs 5,000/-.

In his address, Lalgudi G Jayaraman remembered the old days and his experience with the stalwarts of yester years. He appreciated the mridangam playing of Dorai and said that if the concert is to be successful the mridangam should be competent. He praised K.K.Murthy and A.H. Rama Rao for their benevolence to the promotion of the art.

Earlier, Gurusvayur Dorai who was given the purna kumbha swagatha by B.S. Shivaswamy, was received by K.K. Murthy at the entrance of the hall. U.D.N. Rao welcomed the invitees and dignitaries and A.H. Rama Rao read out a report on the festival.

The citation was read out by Kalavathi.

While giving his felicitous address, V. Doreswamy Iyengar praised K.K. Murthy for his generous gesture of donating the award to music artistes. The invocation was sung by .V. Ramprasad, welcome address was given by U.D.N. Rao, the report was read out by A.H. Rama Rao and the programmed was compered by T.S. Sathyavathy.

Photo Exhibition

A unique photographic exhibition of 62 photographs of selected laya vidwans by N. Sundarraj, editor, Indian Photography and Cinema-tography and managing editor, Phoenix was arranged at the ground floor of Yavanika. The exhibition was open through the five-day festival. This was sponsored by PHOENIX.



Gurusvayur Dorai

Gurusvayur Dorai

Born on July 2, 35, Gurusvayur Dorai learnt playing mridangam from eminent mridanga vidwans Palghat Subba Iyer and Palani Subramanya Pillai. His innate talent and dedicated hardwork gained him a unique and unimitable mastery over mridangam.

Dorai never compromises in quality and tradition and utilises every opportunity to his advantage and betterment. His artistry grew along with his experience.

He has accompanied all top musicians in the country and has evolved a pleasing technique of playing mridangam which pleases every one. During his 53 years of successful career Dorai has been featured in national programmes conducted by AIR and Doordarshan. There is no sahaba or a festival in the country where Dorai has not participated.

His visiting foreign countries is a routine. He is a visiting professor of a couple of Western Universities. He was appointed the Dean of Temple of Fine Arts, an international organisation for the promotion of music and dance in 1994.

Many titles have come his way. to



M.T. Rajakesari

name a few are: Nal Laya Mamani of Tamilnadu Nalvazhi Nilayam; Tal Vilas by Sangeeth Peeth, Sur Singar Samsad, Bombay and Kalaimamani by the Government of Tamilnadu. Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham made his its Asthana Vidwan in 1991.

M.T. Rajakesari

M.T. Rajakesari, the mridangam artiste of repute was trained under K. Gopala Rao at his early age. He had his advanced training under Karaikudi



R. Visweswaran

Mani of Madras.

Mild and soft spoken Rajakesari is on the staff of AIR Bangalore.

R. Visweswaran

R. Visweswaran hails from the family of musicians and Vaggeyakaras of Mysore. He started as a vocalist and later switched over to veena. He is one of the well-known Mysore Brothers.

He was guided by his brother R. Scetharam and believes that the veena play should be vocal based. He has carried out research on many aspects of veena. He has served as the professor in the Department of Performing Arts, University of Mysore. He has given innumerable authoritative lectures on many aspects of music and veena all over the country.

Visweswaran has submitted papers in many seminars on music and his articles have been featured in many prestigious publications.

He has extensively toured giving performances and has conducted workshops on music. His recent workshop in Bangalore drew good response.

Visweswaran is a composer too and can sing well ■

Know your Artistes

M.S. Vidya



M.S. Vidya, a vocalist of high calibre is the daughter of late M. Seshagiri Achar of the famous duo, Bellary Achars. She learnt Carnatic vocal music from her father and later from R.S. Ramamani. She was awarded the State scholarship during 1984 - 1986 and the National scholarship from 1991-1992.

Vidya passed senior grade examination in first class and obtained first rank in Vidvath grade examination in 1995. She is a B High grade artiste of AIR.

She has won the best vocalist prize in various competitions conducted by East Cultural Association, South Central Zone Cultural Centre, Bangalore Gayana Samaja and Malleswaram Sangeetha Sabha.

Vidya's concert career started when she was 11 years. She has given concerts at Malleswaram Sangeetha Sabha, Thyagaraja Gana Sabha, Bangalore and Mysore, Mylapore Fine Arts, Madras, D.K.J. Foundation, Madras and Hyderabad Vigyana Samithi. She is the main vocalist of Karnataka College of Percussion.

Her recent concert at Madras under aegis of Balaganamrutham and Karnataka College of Percussion at Narada Gana Sabha auditorium was well appreciated.

A.P. Rao

Inheritor of a Glorious Tradition

S.N.Chnadrsekhar

The author of the foregoing article is V. Doreswamy Iyengar. He is one of the foremost exponents of the veena, an instrument which has endowed a special status to Mysore, his home town, in the realm of music. Representing a tradition hallowed by such illustrious names as Venkatasubiah, Seshanna, Subbanna and Venkatagiriappa, he is today a most sought after personality at all music festivals, conferences and concerts all over the country both as a performer and for academic erudition. It is not uncommon at such venues to see musicians vying with one another

in exhibiting his concrete influence over their own music, just as young enthusiasts would be keenly longing to learn under him. He is verily the doyen of music in Karnataka, if not the country as a whole today.

A virtuoso of international repute, Dr Iyengar is a refined artiste with wide-ranging interpretative powers. His speciality is the purity of style, not enamoured by the pervading influence of the contact mike. He sticks to the original form, wielding it with immaculate felicity distinction.

Dr Iyengar is the inheritor of a glorious tradition of playing the veena, characterised by a soft 'meetu'. Like his illustrious predecessors tracing back to the legendary Veena Seshanna, his music is charmingly accented and stylistically sensitive, embellishing his melodies with artistic patterning and decorative discernment, imbuing every note with the spirit of the raga and every phrase with its unique colour.

Doreswamy was introduced into the realm of music almost at the same time as he started his schooling, by his father Venkatesha Iyengar, himself an

MYSORE BANI IN VEENA

Dr V.Doreswami Iyengar

We often come across the word 'BANI', used with reference to various styles of music, vocal and instrumental. In Hindusthani music, the term used is 'Gharana'. Though Carnatic music is common to the whole of South India, there are as many variations and techniques as there are linguistic regions. A seasoned listener can approximately guess the school of music to which the artiste belongs. Each region has developed its own technique, style and native characteristics that are typical and have their own charm. These are the main points that collectively form a 'BANI'.

Differences in Banis are more pro-

nounced in veena, there being three major Banis, viz., Thanjavur, Andhra and Mysore. Great vainikas in each Bani have nurtured and enriched the tradition in their own way. It is a difficult task to convey in writing the distinct aspects of a 'Bani'. It should be heard and experienced. But an attempt is made here to acquaint the readers with the '*Mysore Bani in veena*' by explaining its special technique and method of rendering Ragam and Tanam.

Right Hand Technique

The quality of 'Meettu' (plucking of the strings) is given importance. It should be firm, steady and soft. The

strings should be plucked with the index and middle fingers alternately. This ensures a continuous flow of sound. There are special exercises and Swarajatis, specially composed for veena which help a player acquire skill in the art of plucking. Vainikas in the past practiced Swarajatis like the one in Mohanam, composed by Vijayanagaram Gururajacharya, which gave the right hand fingers a special practice. The plucking is done with the natural nails on the fingers and not with plectrum

Left Hand Technique

Much importance is given to the left hand technique also. One would do well to practice compositions

accomplished vainika. But his reinforcement started when he was brought under the tutelage of Vainika Praveena Venkatagiriappa, a renowned Palace vidwan in the early part of this century. It was an ideal 'Guru'Sishya' relationship, the latter's vision of an artistic flight soaring under a disciplinarian who saw the fulfilment of many a musical fancy of his own in his disciple. Assiduous practice combined with such intellectual process trans-

formed the youngster into a mature musician, paving the way for recognition as an 'Asthana Vidwan' by the Mysore palace, the alter of fine arts at the time. Which in reality did not mean a 'kushi job'. On the other hand, it instilled certain tensions, pulls and buoyancy, collectively leading him to arrive at a style that symbolised his softy vision and personality.

During all these strenuous exercises, Doreswamy had not neglected his academic studies, eventually se-

curing a degree from the Mysore University. But it was his achievements in music that carved a career for him.



Dr V. Doreswamy Iyengar and wife S. Haradamma.

bringing laurels from all corners of the globe, including the signal honour of being conferred an honorary doctorate by the same University which had made him a graduate!

That is not all. He is the recipient of almost every honour that an artiste can conceive of including the exalted Padma Bushan of the Union Government and the coveted Sangeeta Kalanidhi of the Madras Music Academy. Prestigious institutions like the Central and State music academies,

the Bangalore Gayana Samaja and the Karnataka Government itself have vied with one another to bestow their honours on him. His long tenure as Producer of Music with the AIR, Bangalore, was studied with as many memorable concerts by himself as the prize-winning features he has produced. His concerts in prestigious festivals abroad have won for him and the land of his birth plaudits from eminent personalities in the field of culture.

With all these awe-inspiring achievements,

Doreswamy Iyengar has remained the same - a dedicated exponent of music, as assiduous in his daily practice as he was as an aspirant. Nor has there been a change in his personality - a personification of grace and humility. He is as easily accessible to persons in authority as to the lowly. He is an eternal friend, philosopher and guide to the artistes, encouraging them with sound advice when they approach him. Indeed, he is an epitome of Karnataka culture! ■

pecially composed for veena which will train the fingers to produce all the 'Dasavidha Gamakas' referred to in musical treatises, besides helping them to negotiate many a difficult musical passage with speed and ease. Each "gamaka" is produced by using the correct techniques like Jaru, Leena, Vali, (inflection of the strings on a single fret), 'spurita' 'pratyahata' etc., in the right context. The technique of using the left hand index and middle fingers, holding them apart, is another unique feature of the Mysore Bani.

This technique helps the player to negotiate a musical passage like

p m g g r r s n n d d p p m g g r in ragas like 'Bilahari' or 'Kharaharapriya'. The whole movement from Tara to Mandhra sthayi is done in a single stroke and in a fast speed. The sound is kept alive by skillful use of the left hand middle finger. This technique can only be acquired by hard practice. The side strings of a veena are used only to indicate 'Laghus' and 'Dhrutas' of a Tala cycle and never used unnecessarily to disturb the main sound. There should be a balanced use of the different techniques, each one in the right context

TANAS

The style of rendering Tanas has its own grandeur and special techniques. Tanas move in a medium and steady speed in combinations of 3, 5, or 7 swaras. The sound of the side-strings is interspersed in between the notes. The right hand and left-hand fingers must be used in a disciplined manner.

It is a highly evolved technique. To master it, Vainikas of the older generation used to practice hundreds of 'chitta tanas' (composed Tanas) in Ghana ragas like Nata, Gowla, ■



Dr Iyengar when he took over as AIR music producer

Arabhi, Varali, Sri, Kedara, Reetigowla, Narayana Gowla etc., Occasional interspersions of phrases in the higher speeds make the Tanas very lively. There are different varieties of Tanas like Gaja Tana, Mandooka Tana, Ashwa Tana, Shanukha Tana, etc., which remind one of the movements of the respective animals. While playing Chakra Tana the left hand fingers move on all the strings in a circular manner.

The Mysore Bani on the whole

has a direct appeal and sustaining quality. It has been in vogue for the last 175 years since the days of Veena Venkatasubbiah, who was an Asthana vidwan in the court of Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar III. (19th century). It reached the acme of perfection in the hands of Vainika Sikhamani Seshanna of hallowed memory, who was the most celebrated amongst the vainikas of Mysore and enhanced the reputation of Mysore as a Veena centre. He believed that the scope of the veena would be constricted if confined purely to the vocal style. He and the other vainikas

of an earlier era felt that the potentialities of the instrument should be fully exploited by a judicious combination of the vocal and veena techniques in order to make a veena recital more sustaining and satisfactory. Seshanna made full use of the techniques mentioned in the Lakshana Granthas and added a few new ones too.

Veena Bakshi Subbanna, Seshanna's contemporary, adopted the vocal style as he was a disciple of Mysore Sadasiva Rao. Seshanna, be-

ing endowed with a rich imagination, devoted a considerable portion of a concert to the creative aspects like Ragam, Tanam and Pallavi. His 'meettus' were so mature that one felt he was plucking the strings with a feather. He had a gift for 'Daatu-swara prayogas' like 'g-p-s-g, n-r-p-a, p-n-r-p, g-p-n-p' (Hamsadhvani) and used them without marring the beauty of the Raga.

Ragas like Todi, Kalyani, Jhunjooti and Khamas, when played by him had a flavour of their own, a Mysore flavour if one may call it. A sample of this flavour could be tested in his famous tillana in Junjooti.

The Mysore Bani in veena existed in its purest form till about 45 years ago. Vainikas like my Guru Vainika Praveena Venkatagiriappa, Bhairavi Lakshminaranappa and Veena Shivaramaiah zealously guarded this style, in character and form. After their time, the Mysore Bani came under different influences as a result of which it lost its exclusive characteristics. The present Mysore Bani is more vocal oriented. In spite of these changes, traces of the old Mysore technique are noticeable to a large extent in some old timers still surviving.

In today's context, it is better for each Bani to take some salient points from the other and be the richer for it. ■

Master of the Strings

S.Ramachandran MA

It has been authoritatively stated that, as expressing human emotions, there is no other aspect of art or philosophy, which can excel music. The human emotions have yet to be defined clearly, except under certain divergences. Music has its own language, the language of the heart and its appeal is universal. Expression of one's

thoughts or feelings through music can never mislead, contrary to spoken words. We are also aware that the culture of a nation is best described in music and allied fine arts. Every occurrence in the world of phenomena leads us in the ultimate analysis to vibrations. It is only a very limited range of these vibrations in a limited

number of media that are cognisable by our outer senses. A certain gamut gives the experience or sound, another light and so on. In the case of music, the vibrations, set up in air, affecting certain regions in our auditory organism convey certain impression to the cerebral area, which, in turn, relate them to other aspects in our nature on the principle of correspondence converting them into reflections in mind, emotion, intuition etc.

Through the medium of sound reaching our physical tympanum, our emotional, intellectual and spiritual aspects are affected. True music, however, goes far deeper to our very soul

and leaves an indelible imprint. It may not be possible to explain and describe this reaction in ordinary language; it can only be felt. This is one of those great mystic experience which baffle analytical expression. An artiste can reveal his inner most soul in his music, forget himself in it, and experiences great peace and calm; at such moments he feels something pouring into and permeating him and he senses the bliss of creative art activity. This is the true artiste.

The world of Carnatic music has been graced by towering personalities, in all branches of the art, who had imbibed all that was divine and essential and thrilled the listeners over a span of many years.

They in turn, had handed down this rich legacy to a newer generation and this inheritance has continued to this day. Thus the great art has been preserved and will continue to be cherished eternally.

In the realm of Carnatic music, we have a number of artistes, some of them in the top rank, who sing well and play well. But do we have many creative artistes in the true sense of the term? One of the striking features of our music is that, while it is apparently governed by rules and regulations, it is at the same time so elastic, so full of possibilities of improvisation and so remarkably capable of manodharma. While giving due consideration to tradition stemming from the past, Carnatic music is free and improved upon so that all powers of imagination in the artiste - but strictly within the framework as laid down by the past masters - are brought into play.

Padma Bhushana Sangitha Kalanidhi Dr Venkatesa Iyengar Doreswamy Iyengar fills the picture to a very great extent. Like shining stars in the clouded sky he is one of the few vainikas with us who elevate classical music from the general gloom that appears to have settled on it. He presents great compositions in the style they ought to be whenever he performs. He has the

heart for the music he plays, choosing the fare with extreme care and presenting it with a knowledge of beautiful interpretation that sets maximum store by responsible use of the strings, a habit that has constantly deepened its functioning and freshened its appeal. The excellence of his *pata* and the strength of his style in which he maintains repose and delicate beauty have won for him the hearts of thousands of his listeners.

Born in a musical family, his father Venkatesha Iyengar was both a vainika and flutist, and was a member of the palace's orchestra, young Doreswamy Iyengar learned the rudiments from his father. The leader of the orchestral group and also the *asthana vidwan* of Mysore court, Venkatagiriappa happened to hear the youngster practising one day and decided to take him under his wing. Thus began a career that was to continue for more than ten years, by which time, Doreswamy Iyengar had become an artiste of renown. Venkatagiriappa taught him the notations of Western music also, and the *sisya* used to help his guru to write down *krithis* in western notations, along with their harmonising accompaniments! Iyengar also attended *mridangam* classes to acquire greater repertoire in his *swaraprastharas*. When his *sisya* passed out of the college at Mysore, guru Venkatagiriappa arranged for his appointment as *Asthana Vidwan* at Mysore Court. Venkatagiriappa was a most kind hearted man who gave so generally of all his vast learning to his pupil. He would have been gratified to see his favourite student rise to the position of *veena's* foremost master of today.

Doreswamy Iyengar is perhaps one of the very few vainikas who are imbibed with a steadfast loyalty and zealous faith in "Sampradhaaya". His delicate sense of melodic values has never been corrupted by the many changes in trends. There is no acrobaticism or gimmickry which could border on vandalism. There are no

pyrotechnics, no bald parody, no drolling boom, no clap-trap. One can go on and on. His music stems from absolute dedication and industry and finds its proper level. His artistry in enriching the melody without violence has always been a matter of filigreed beauty. To those who long to listen to reposeful and sublime music, a concert by Doreswamy Iyengar would more than quench their thirst.

A man of simple habits and conventional decorum, Doreswamy Iyengar is perhaps the only vainika who does not use a contact mike. He has his own reasons for it, as he explains: "Fundamentally the *veena* is a melodic instrument. Its sound or *naadham* is to be presented in as close to its true tone as possible. I know that contact mike has come to stay, but it has also come to kill all the fine, delicate, subtle, almost spiritual nuances of our music which is intended to be rendered without any distortion through a mechanical or an electronic gadget. Arguments may be made in favour of the mike, but it is a fact that it takes away the charm, delicacy, fineness, and the finish so characteristic of our music".

Doreswamy Iyengar has held the post of the Programme Director of AIR, Bangalore, and is a member of the Experts' Committee of the Music Academy, Madras. He also headed the Karnataka State Sangitha Nrithya Academy for three years. He has performed at all the centres in the country, and visited abroad where his fingers have enchanted the listening public. One memorable occasion that cannot be easily forgotten - a few years ago in Madras - when the redoubtable Palghat Mani Aiyar requested Doreswamy Iyengar to play on his *veena* and demonstrate the art of "tanam-playing", and he himself (Mani Aiyar) accompanied him on the *Mridangam*. The two instruments so enhanced each other's melody in the smooth flow of rhythmic patterns, that the audience was almost mesmerized.

ARAN



Photos

The Bharatanatyam arangetram of Smitha Iyengar, daughter of G.K. Sridhar and Jyothi Sridhar was conducted on August 3, 96 at the Ravindra Kalakshetra, Bangalore.

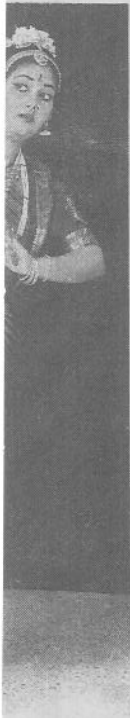
Smitha's maiden programme consisted of items which were notable for their melodious and rhythmic aspects.

The excellent orchestral support was provided by U.K. Arun and Savitha Arun (nattuvangam), Jahnavi Jayaprakash (vocal), Gurumurthy (mridangam), Hemant Kumar (violin), K.C. Aswathanarayan (flute) and Balakrishna (morching).

Smitha is the grand daughter of late G. Krishna Iyengar, founder of well known "Iyengar and Sons", popularly known as "The only Tyre Clinic", set on a journey to Bharatanatyam at an early age of nine. She came under the guidance of vidwan U.K. Arun and Savitha Arun of Nritya Vidya Niketan, Bangalore.



GRAM



arraj



She completed the State Junior Examination with distinction performing well in the Senior Grade, confident of repeating the feat.

Smitha is a keen exponent of Carnatic music, trained by N.S. Raman of Bangalore. She has given recitals along with her sister Preethi Iyengar, to win recognition as Javagal Sisters. Their performance at the Sri Ramaseva Mandali, Chamarajapet, Bangalore, known as the citadel of music, was acclaimed as above average. Her interest in Western music is as absorbing.

Smitha is as keen academically to graduate in Commerce and to secure a Master Degree in Business Administration. She has been a disciplined student with cultured manners. She is acclaimed as a favourite amongst friends and relatives.



AIR Turns Visual



B.K.S.Verma drawing with a thread dipped in ink

Outside broadcast is not a new concept for Akashvani. Important events are marked with a concert or feature to an invited audience, broadcast live or recorded for subsequent use.

Chitra Kavya, the Bangalore

AIR's latest venture was in a similar vein, though with a wider appeal. Blending poetry, music, song and the visual art of painting was a worthwhile proposition. For some unknown reason dance, alas, was kept out of its purview ! But it was a successful experiment, the overwhelming re-

sponse of the audience at Yavanika recently vouching for it.

The approach is to blend the different forms of artistic expression. The reaction is in a chain, its "Srushti" part starting with the recitation of the verse, the composer embellishing it with a tune, the singer vocalising it in music and the painter interpreting the idea on his canvas.

The process is reversed in "Prati Srushti", Here the poet is asked to view a canvas and give vent to his impression lyrically and the composer and singer interact with him jointly to render it in a song.

The programme generated as much enthusiasm among the participants as the curiosity of the audience. It was interesting to watch artists B.K.S.Verma and M.B. Patil interpreting popular lines of D.R.Bendre, 'Vinayaka' and G.S.Shivarudappa meaningfully. If the alacrity in which Verma manipulated a thread dipped in ink to arrive at his linear compositions was incredible, the deft handling of water-colors by Patil to produce colour fantasies was as fascinating.

One such painting evoked a poem in H.S.Venkatesha Murthy, bringing metaphors bordering on metaphysics. The eight-line lyric was enlivened in



L to R G.V.Atri, M.Nagendra, V.Jayashree and Premalatha singing at the Chitra Kavya organised by the AIR

the soulful refrain of Shanta Jayateertha in 'ghazal' style.

Likewise M.N. Vyasa Rao touched popular sentiments when he drew inspiration from another canvas, pleading for ecological balance. Dodda Rangepowda echoed a similar fear about the dwindling green cover, sore that mankind should have forgotten its roots of evolution. P.S. Vasantha and G.V. Atri rendered these lyrics with

due accent on the sentiments.

Indeed, the AIR which is essentially an audio medium had exploited the potential of the visual medium admirably. It is for the first time in the city that a cultural organisation attempted to blend diverse artistic expressions into a cohesive aesthetic entertainment, a synthesis which holds immense possibilities.

KAY JEE

Bhoop or Deskar

Prof.N.Krishnaswamy

It is a film song "*Jyoti Kalash Chamakey*". What raga is this? It is always interesting to try and trace the raga in a film song. I can see the scale is Sa Ri Ga Pa Dha Sa and Sa Dha Pa Ga Ri Sa.

But it does not sound like Bhoop, as does, say "*Sayonara, Sayonara*". I have not heard many Japanese songs. But the few I have seem to be based on a pentatonic scale like Bhoop. The melody is simple. Modern film music is not like that.

The film songs of the early days of Indian cinema, from New Theatres, Prabhat and Bombay Talkies work straight forward. When K.L. Saigal sang "*Balam aye baso more man mey*", it was typical Kafi and when he sang "*Babul mora maihar choot hi joy*" it was an unmistakable Bhairavi, in fact it is a Thumri composed by the unfortunate Nawab of Awadh - Mohammed Shah Rangiley.

I have heard Bhimsen Joshi sing this Thumri in an unforgettable Bhairavi. So most of the songs of Saigal were straight classical music. If you master all songs of Saigal you get a good introduction to the ragas of Hindustani music. I got my introduction to classical music through Saigal.

But what raga is this "*Jyoti Kalash*"? I thought it was Bhoop till

Baby comes from Nagpur and tells me is in Deskar. Deskar has always intrigued me. It sounds like Bhoop. But it is not cent percent Bhoop. She tells me it is because the vadi of Bhoop is Ga and the vadi of Deskar is Dha it is not like Karnatak music, where Mohana is always mohana, no mistake.

I have read some where, some one doing an analysis of this vadi - samvadi. He has found, in practice, that many great musicians do not use the vadi more than the other swaras while singing. And this samvadi, where does that come? The analysis could find any clue for that, in actual practice.

I tell all this to Baby. I tell her all this vadi-samvadi is meaningless. It is only a trick to fool the lay man - the professional musician trying to make a "ga-dha" of the poor layman. Baby says "you may talk like that. But if I write like that in my theory paper, I will get a zero."

She is studying music. She says Bhoop-Deskar are just like Bhairavi and Kalingada. Now, What is the difference between these two ragas? I do not see any difference between them, either! when a Bhairavi starts being odd, I suspect that it might be Kalingada. Kalingada is Bhairavi in disguise!■

Extraordinary Talent



The world of music has come across quite a few young ones of extraordinary talent. Even before they were five years of age, Ravikiran (chitraveena artiste) and his cousin Ganesh could identify any Raga in a jiffy. That was a phenomenon as neither had any idea of 'swaras'. As ignorant they were of the "three Rs".

A more striking phenomenon has come to light in Baby M.N. Ratnakanchi whose genius revealed itself when she was hardly four. Though she had not been initiated into music, she was at that tender age identifying the 'swaras' in all types of music-vocal or instrumental.

As her mother Neela Ramanujam, herself a competent vocalist, explains as a child of four Ratna delighted in reproducing tunes emanating over the TV or radio instantly. What is more, she could as casually render the tune in 'swaras'.

This genius in her has won recognition from several quarters. The AIR has featured her in "Chilimili" and the TV in its children's programme. The Sangeeta Rasika Samkhya, Tirupati has given a certificate about her 'fine demonstration' under its auspices.

Now six, Ratna is studying in the III standard in the Cluny Convent and is reported to be good in studies too. Growing in an atmosphere surcharged with music, there is every hope that Ratna will blossom into as good a musician as her mother.

From Here & There

Bombay Beat

Concert Stage

Anuradha Krishnamurthi, gave a vocal recital at the Little Theatre on June 10, 96. She was accompanied by Kalpana Kishore (violin) and Arun Prakash (mridangam).

A concert by Gulam Hussain, in memory of Ustad Vilayat Hussain Khan was organised at the Dadar Matunga Cultural Centre Hall on June 16, 96. Rajendra Antarkar supported his on tabala and Rajabhau Patwardhan on harmonium.

A jugalbandi by Neela Bhagwat and Aruna Sayeeram was presented at the Tilak Mandir, Vile Parle East under the aegis of Vile Parle Music Circle.

Nagamani Srinath of Mysore gave a Carnatic vocal recital on June 24, 96 at the Little Theatre.

Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha

Forthcoming Programmes

Aug 10: Nagaswaram by Mambalam M.K.S. Siva and Mambalam M.K.S. Natarajan accompaniments: Tirupungur T.G. Muthukumaraswamy and Mambalam M.K.S. Shanmugam (thavil).

Aug 25: Mandolin by A.P. Raju and party

Sep 14: Vocal recital by T.M. Krishna, Kalpana Kishore (violin) and Kallidai-kurchi Sivakumar (mridangam).

Sep 16: Vocal recital by Swati Shastri. M.S.N. Murthy (violin) and Sriram Subramanyam (mridangam).

Oct 19: Vocal by Vijayalakshmi Subramanyam, M.Narmada (violin)

and J.Vaidyanathan (mridangam).

Oct 20: Vocal V. Shankaranara-yanan. R.Hemalatha (violin), Tiruvidaimarudur S. Shankaran (mridangam) and K.S. Rangachari (kanjira).

Oct 21: Flute recital by L.V. Mukund of Bangalore.

Geetha Raja

Ongole Festival

A two day festival of music in memory of Gayaka Chakravarthi Denurikonda Subbarao Panthulu was held on April 20 and 21 at the Gayathri Devi Kalyana Mandapam, Ongole.

Bommaraju Gopalakrishna Murthy sang the krithis of Subbarao Panthulu accompanied by Kooravadi Yelamandaraju (violin) and Mugilicherla Sriramulu (mridangam). This was followed by another vocal concert by Kuravi Lalitha accompanied by Palaparthi Nageswara Rao (violin) and K.Sadguru Charan (mridangam).

April 21 saw the group singing by the students of Sri Vani Kalaniketan supported by Yelamandaraju (violin) and Sriramulu (mridangam).

Mridangam artiste Dandamudi Rammohan Rao of Vijayawada was honoured for his services to Carnatic music.

Later Nellabotla Ranganayaka Sharma concluded the festival with his vocal concert supported by P. Nageswara Rao (violin), K. Sadguru Charan (mridangam) and Bhuparapalli Venkateswaralu (ghatam).

A Carnatic music competition for juniors and seniors was held during the festival.

C.Narasa Raju, Chirala

Bangalore Beat

Cassette Released

Audio Cassette, by M.A. Meera and M.A. Mythili was released at Sri Vadiraja Sabha Bhavana, Bangalore by Veena Vidwan V. Doreswamy Iyengar. S.K. Ramachandra Rao spoke on the compositions

The sabha founded by M.A. Narasimhachar celebrated its 54th anniversary.

Geje Naada

A three day festival of dance, 'Geje Naada' was held at the Ravindra Kalakshetra, Bangalore under Shambhavi Nrithya Shaale.

Compositions on Ganesha

Karnataka Gana Kala Parishat, Bangalore organised special training camps of compositions on Ganesha by various composers at Ananya, Malleswaram and Srirama Mandira, Basavanagudi on July 11 and 13 respectively.

Madras Beat Annamacharya Day

588th Jayanthi Celebrations of Tallapakka Annamacharya was celebrated at the Music Academy, Madras, on July 20, 96.

Songs of Annamacharya were sung by the group led by G.Balakrishna Prasad, B.Rajam Iyer and Mani Krishnaswamy

M.S.Subbulakshmi gave a recital accompanied by Savithri (violin) and K.V.Prasad (Mridangam) to the packed audience at the T.T.K. Auditorium.

Semmangudi Honoured

Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer Golden Jubilee Trust celebrated the 89th birthday of Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer at Madras recently.

Semmangudi advised youngsters to give importance in spelling out swaras or the sahitya while performing. He pointed out that melody should reign supreme in music.

Violin vidwan M.S. Anantharaman was felicitated by K.V. Narayana Swamy for his dedicated service to music.

Later Papanasam Ashok Ranani gave a vocal concert.

Agenda for August and September

August 20 to 22: Chembai's Centenary Celebrations
Venue: Bangalore Gayana Samaja

Sri Subbaramaiah Fine Art Trust

August 25: P.S. Vasantha (vocal), S. Chandrasekhar (violin), Renuka Prasad (mridangam) and B.R. Ravikumar (ghatam).
Venue: Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs, N.R.Colony, Bangalore.

August 26: Navagraha Kritis by S.Shankar, R.S. Ramakanth, T.S. Sahavathy and R.N.Srilatha
Venue: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bangalore

Malleswaram Sangeetha Sabha

at the Music Academy, Madras. **Sept 15, 96 :** Concert by Hyderabad Sisters.

Sep 22, 96 : Saxophone concert by Mangalore K. Anantha Ram. R.Raghuram (violin), S.Subbarao (mridangam) and Dayananda Mohite (ghatam).

Venue: Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs, Malleswaram, Bangalore.

Percussive Arts Centre Bangalore Youth Wing

Sep 6, 96 : Sarvotham (Flute), Jyotsana Manjunath (violin), T.N. Ramesh (mridangam), A.S. Kumar (Kanjira).

Sep 7, 96 : V.Shankaranarayan (vocal), V.Prema (violin), B.R. Srinivas (mridangam), G. Omkar (ghata).

Sep 8, 96 : Karaikudi Subramanyam (veena), Sankari Krishnan (vocal support), K.S. Sudhaman (mridangam).

Sep 9, 96 : Srikanthan Nagendra Sastri (vocal), Charulatha (violin), N.S. Mahesh (mridangam), S. Prashanth (kanjira).

Sep 10, 96 : Srivardhini (vocal), Maheshwara Sastri (mridangam), R.N. Prathap (ghata).

Venue : Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs, N.R.Colony, Bangalore.

Bangalore Gayana Samaja

August 20 : Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar Centenary Celebration. Kadri Gopalnath (saxophone), A. Kanyakumari (violin), Guruvayur Dorai (mridangam), Paldhar K.V.S. Ramani (ghatam) and B. Rajashekar (morching). 6-00 pm.

August 21: Neyveli Santhanagopalan (vocal), S. Varadarajan (violin) and T.K. Murthy (mridangam), 6-00 pm.

August 22: Karnatak Jazz interaction, 6-00 pm.

August 25: Basavanagudi G Nataraj and N. Sunitha (violin duet), Vasudeva Rao (mridangam), Dayananda Mohite (ghatam) and N. Amrit (kanjira), 6-00 pm.

September 1: Sugama Sangitha by

Y.K. Muddu Krishna and Party, 4-15 pm.

September 8: Vocal concert by Soumya and party, 4-15 pm.

September 21: AIR Radio Sangeetha Sammelana concert before invited audience. K.J. Jose and party, Dilruba and Palai C.K. Ramachandran and party, vocal, 6-00 pm.

September 22: R.P. Shastry and party, Hindusthani violin and Mani Prasad and party Hindusthani vocal, 6-00 pm.

Devagiri Sangitha Sabha, Bsk II Stage, Bangalore.

September 29: Vocal Concert by Geetha Raja and party.

Sangeet Samanvaya

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and Karnataka Sangeetha Nritya Academy organised "Sangeetha Samanvaya", festival on the adaptation of Western music instruments to Carnatic music at the Bhavan premises recently.

Raja Ramanna, renowned scientist inaugurated the festival. B.V.K. Sastry, noted critic and V. Doreswamy Iyengar spoke on Western musical instruments.

C. Ramadas on piono, H.S. Anasuya on Indonesian instrument, Anklung and M.V. Nagendrappa on Cello participated in the festival which concluded with a jugalbandi by Kadri Gopalnath (saxophone) and Narasimhulu Vadavatti (clarinet). M.A. Krishna Murthy (mridangam), Vishwanath Nakod (tabla) and B. Rajashekar (morching) accompanied them.

Efforts of H.S. Suresh in executing this unique event is laudable.

Correction

RMV Sangeetha Sabha, Bangalore will conduct music concerts on the last Sundays of every month and not on last Friday as mentioned in May 96 PHOENIX.

Mid-season Musical Marvel

N.Sundarraaj



Lalgudi G Jayaraman inaugurating the Mid-Season Music Marvel

Mid-season Musical Marvel, a four day festival of music, jointly organised by Karnataka College of Percussion of Bangalore and Balaganamrutham, Madras was inaugurated by Violin Maestro Lalgudi G. Jayaraman on the evening of July 27 at the Narada Gana Sabha (Mini Hall) Madras amidst a packed audience.

V. Krishnan, General Manager, Indian Telephone Industries, Bangalore, in his inaugural address lauded the efforts of Vidwan T.A.S. Mani of KCP and Balasubramanyam of Balaganamrutham for organising such a festival in Madras. He offered his auditorium at Egmore for this festival next year free of cost.

B.V.K. Sastry noted art, music and dance critic of Bangalore said that he knew Mani as Master Mani, Vidwan Mani, Guru Mani and organiser Mani. He called upon musicians to inculcate the interest amongst youngsters. He hoped that this festival would serve as a bridge between the entire sphere of Carnatic Music.

Earlier Balasubramanyam presented the invocation and welcome address.

The festival commenced with the vocal recital of Deepa and Divya accompanied by Suresh Babu (violin), Thiruvaidaimuruthur Sankaran (Mridangam) and Narasimhan (Ghatam).

Later followed by a vocal concert by O.S. Thiagarajan supported by M. Chandrasekharan (Violin),

Umayalapuram Sivaraman (Mridangam) and E.M. Subramanyam (Ghatam).

Next day evening M.S. Vidya of Bangalore gave a vocal concert accompanied by Tiruvarur M. Balan (Violin), Nagai Narayanan (Mridangam) and Madipakkam Murali (Ghatam).

Bangalore Ramamani's vocal concert which followed later was accompanied by M.A. Krishnaswami (Violin), Tanjore Kumar (Mridangam) and T.D. Balasubramaniam (Ghatam).

N. Pattabhiraman, editor-in-chief of Sruti who was the chief guest said the fusion between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu was welcome. "Many musicians from all over the world yearn to perform in Madras in the season" he concluded.

Bangalore K. Venkatram, the renowned percussionist from Bangalore, who is also the director of Percussive Arts Centre, lucidly explained the intricate Chandas talas used in the Tiruppugazh. This was followed by Tala Tarangini by Karnataka College of Percussion directed by Vidwan T.A.S. Mani.



M.S.Vidya gave a vocal concert



Tala Tarangini by Karnataka College of Percussion of Bangalore

Anuradha Suresh Krishna Murthy, daughter of K.V. Narayanaswamy gave a vocal performance later. She was accompanied by Varadarajan (Violin), Kallidaikurichi S. Sivakumar (mridangam) and Ravi Chandran (Ghatam).

R. Krishnaswamy, Secretary of Narada Gana Sabha, who was the chief guest appreciating the efforts of K.C.P and Balaganamrutham in this venture offered the sabha hall at a nominal rent for their future programmes.

Curtains came down on the last day of the festival with Vidya of Madras singing to the accompaniments of Padma (violin), B. Jayanth (mridangam) and Ramdas (Ghatam).

The main concert of the evening was by Tirchur V. Ramachandran (Vocal) accompanied by M. Chandrasekharan (Violin) T.A.S. Mani (mridangam) and Pudukottai M. Ramachandran (Ghatam).

Maithreyi Ramadurai, secretary of Music Academy, Madras was the chief guest.

It is hoped that in the succeeding years musical marvel would induct more artistes of Karnataka than providing a platform to those whose opportunities aplenty. ■

TALATARANGINI

Bangalore K.Venkataram

Introducing T.A.S. Mani and the Karnataka College of Percussion, (KCP) Bangalore, Bangalore K Venkataram traced that T.A.S. Mani's KCP was the first such institution to offer tutitioning in percussion in Karnataka.

The first percussion ensemble, Tala Tarangini, formed by Mani included the usual concert instruments - mridanga, ghata, kanjira, morching etc. Later additions were dholak, thavil (dolu) khol etc. It is to the credit of Mani that he has performed in several countries abroad and cut several recordings with jazz and trumpets with his troupe and wife R.A. Ramamani.

The author recalled the attempts of his own Percussive Arts Centre (PAC) to draw attention of music lovers to identify the independent personality of laya vadyas, is differ-

ent from the scope and limitations as accompaniment which is exclusively a supporting role. Several lecdems by scholar musicians like Lalgudi Jayaraman, Umayalapuram Sivaraman, T.K. Murthy, Trichy Sankaran, Karaikkudi Mani, Nikhil Ghosh, under the auspices of the PAC highlighting the intricacies of laya and allied topics were referred to.

Similar to exclusive pakhwaj and tabla solo recitals in Hindustani music festivals, solo items of maestro Palghat Mani Iyer, Palghat Raghu and others were broadcast over the AIR in the National Programme and the Radio Sangeetha Sammelans. Exclusive compositions have been attempted by artistes like Vijaya Rahava Rao, Gnyan Prakash Ghosh, Sivaraman, T.K. Murthy, Karaikkudi Mani, Bangalore Venkataram, Anoor Ananthakrishna Sharma and others.

In this background, the laya vinyasa by exclusive laya vadyas played for quite an infrequent eleven-beat cycle was introduced.

Tracing the origins - Sama Veda to music as per Bharatha, Thaala kriyas like Anu Dhrutha, Dhrutha and Laghu owe their origin to the "Hastha Vinyasa" of rendering "Veda Paata". Mathanga, Sarangadeva and others have discussed the "Chandas" in "Sangeetha Saastra".

In total, thaala is to gaana, what chandas is to kaavya. Every language has its own "Chandas gathi". Sanskrit chandas did not continue in the chandas of other languages. Each language has its own "Guna" - bhaasha uchaarana, depending on the "Swara Bhaara" of that bhaasha. We can identify taala and laya in the chandas of every language.

"Thiruppugazhs" (Deva Stuthi) of Arunagirinathar are songs rendered by divine inspiration in praise of Lord Subrahmanya Swami (Muruga). Arunagirinathar lived in the times of Prouda Deva Raya who ruled Vijayanagar between 1424 - 46. He was an incomparable master of rhythm in Indian music. He blazed a new trail, not only in rhythm, but in the compositions of a unique genus of devotional music called "Thiruppugazhs".

No music scholar has yet identified all the taalas figuring in Thiruppugazhs. Many taalas in the "Chandas" meters of these Thiruppugazhs defy classification. There are songs in the usual 35 taala scheme. But even in the 108 taala scheme, 52 taala scheme, Navasandhi taala scheme and several others. Then there are several taalas which do not fall under any of these known thala classifications.

Thus, Thiruppugazh is a vast ocean of intricate sophisticated time measurers and studies made so far have only touched the fringe of the problem.

In the prevalent 35-taala scheme, there are no taalas of 19 or 31 counts whereas all other measures can be manipulated by the combination of kalais, nadais etc.

The 11 beat cycle chosen for the laya vinyasa has three taalas in the Sulaadi taala scheme (Sankeerna Rupaka = 2+9, Misra Thripata = 7+4 and Thrisra Dhruva = 3+2+3+3). But the operation of this time measure, ie the "Kriya" is what makes the structure uneasy. This 11-beat cycle was rendered by the noted thavil artiste Haridwaramangalam A.K.Palanivel in the thavil wizard Needamangalam Meenakshisundaram Pillai (14th Thaalaa Vaadyothsava in 1995).

The intricacy lay in the operation of the "Visarjitha" (wave) used: the measures are (4 counts + Beat + Beat and Wave = 6 1/2) and (3 Beats + Beat and Wave = 4 1/2) totalling 11.

A Thiruppugazh and the mnemonics used and rendered by Alathoor Brothers with Lalgudi Jayaraman and Palghat Mani Iyer from the AIR recordings were vocally rendered and explained. There are several chandas - Thiruppugazhs of 5 1/2 counts to a cycle with different denominations (1 1/2 + 1 1/2 + 2 1/2, 2 + 2 + 1 1/2, 2 1/2 + 1 1/2 + 1 1/2, 2 + 1 1/2 + 2, 1 1/2 + 2 + 2) published in the "Thiruppugazh, Isai Vazhipaadu" by Thiruppugazh Anbargal, New Delhi - 57 in 1993.

The laya vinyasa of 11-beats chosen for the day is operated as 4 counts and a Khanda Chapu (6 1/2) and 2 counts and a Khanda Chapu (4 1/2) played individually, later adopting the "Koraippu", building up a finale, customary in Thalavadya Laya Vinyasa.

The introduction was provided by Vidwan Venkataram to the Laya Vinyasa of KCP's TALATARA-NGINI at the four-day "Mid-Season Music Marvel" at Madras on July 27, 1996.

The event was made doubly significant by the presence, in the select audience, renowned percussionists, Palghat Raghu and Umayalapuram Sivaraman, besides the violin maestro, Lalgudi G Jayaraman.

At the conclusion, all the three stalwarts paid handsome tributes to T.A.S. Mani who had conceived and presented the unique ensemble.

Brinda Passes Away

Renowned Carnatic vocalist, T. Brinda passed away on August 6, at Madras following a brief illness. She was 84.

Brinda, who was the grand daughter of Veena Dhanammal, was the recipient of President Puraskar award, Sangeet Natak Academy's National award, Sangeetha Kalanidhi, Sangeeta Sikhmani and President's Swarna Kamal. She was the recipient of the Fellowship in music of the Union Government for her outstanding contribution to Carnatic music. She was a professor of music in Tamil Nadu Government Music College.

Apart from learning music from her grand mother, Brinda had learnt from Kanjeevaram Nayana Pillai.

She was well known for her famous rendition of padams and javalis in Carnatic music and along with her sister Muktha formed a famous duo in classical music in the 1950s setting a special trend in music recitals. Many young musicians have greatly benefited by her guidance and teaching.

She is survived by two sons and a daughter, Veghavahini.

Subscribe to

PHOENIX

the only magazine on music and dance in Karnataka

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00

Three Years: Rs 140-00

Send your subscription by Cheque or MO favouring

'Phoenix' to : The Circulation Manager,

Phoenix, 138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar,

Bangalore 560009 © 2263696

Chitrakala Institute of Advance Studies

A four month evening certificate course in
ART APPRECIATION.

Open to professionals/students, persons
interested in the arts.

Course starts on 1st September 1, 1996.

For details contact:

The General Secretary

Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath

Art Complex, Kumara Krupa Road, BANGALORE 560001.

LAST DATE FOR REGISTRATION.:

August 25, 1996.

In Lighter Vein

Nayikas -Then and Now

Manu Vijay



Shringara Rasa, or the sentiment of love and its myriad shades, is the life-blood of Indian classical dances. While the Rasa or emotion remains the same, its attitudes, concepts and manifestations have changed with the times.

The young dancer today, is a far cry from the shy, demure nayika she has to portray, and would boldly walk out of a dishonest relationship rather than bear the indignity of being cheated. Small wonder, dancers can

do little justice to their abhinaya numbers !

Take for example, the Vasakasajja, waiting for her date, swathed in the finest mirror-works, the highest of heels and a Chanel perfume, ready for the kill. If the date; (in this case, the nayaka) doesn't quite make it, well, the loss is all his. Our Vipralabda nayika would probably make it on her own for the movie she always wanted to see, or join her cronies at the pub for a drink.

While the basic emotions of jeal-

ousy, envy and rage at betrayal remain the same, their expressions vary a great deal. The teenager of the MTV generation is a woman of action, and rather than languishing in a bower of sweet scented flowers, our Virahotkantitha nayika would dump her young man without another word, or march up to him and give him the tight slap he much deserves.

The Swiya nayika (the wife for those ignorant), whose husband is a cheat, would, if she is an Uttama, pack his things neatly in his leather suitcases and leave them outside the door to be picked up at will first. A not-so-Uttama nayika would seize the opportunity to return the affections of the colleague in her office and send him E-mail filled with innuendo.

The Khandita would fling every object within reach at the unsuspecting nayaka, the sharper the object, the better. The Kalahantarita is of course, made of sterner stuff. Cry, she might not out of remorse, but usually to find a 'broader' shoulder to lean on, for, move on, she must. The Abhisarika would never, and I mean never, even in her wildest dreams set out in search of her man. If he, in all humility were to make the first, second and third moves in a bid to salvage the relationship, our nayika would think seriously in terms of a thirty page pre-nuptial agreement. Wedded bliss, for a Swadina pathika nayika experiencing 'sambhoga', does not translate to sandal paste and moonlight. Today's lady expects a trip for two to the Maldives with a Tanishq watch thrown in as an expression of undying love.

Confident, educated, street smart, worldly wise and above all assertive how can this pretty young thing perform a 'Maathada Baaradeno' ?

Tuneful Encounters -7

Lords of the Strings

S.N.Sivaswamy

The inimitable Mysore T. Chowdiah had among his many disciples, an extraordinarily talented duo posted as Staff Artistes in All India Radio, Madras, where I started my career. They were R.K. Venkatarama Sastry and V. Sethuramiah. Both were, like me, Kannadigas, a fact which drew us together.

We were always speaking to one another in Kannada, attracting snide remarks from others (who could not conceal their envy) like "Oh! The Kannada birds have flocked together again!"

I was incharge of music, English and the few Kannada programmes of the station, though the attention given by the authorities to Kannada was rather perfunctory. There was a fortnightly Kannada play to be broadcast with a meagre budget, so meagre that I had to manage the show with the help of all possible free sources of voices including engineering officers knowing Kannada.

I used to request both Venkatarama Sastry and Sethuramiah to lend their voices in these Kannada plays. As they understood my budgetary constraints, they participated in this extra-curricular duty without protest.

While Venkatarama Sastry was at home with Kannada, and did not need much practice for rendering his lines, Sethuramiah, who had his schooling in Tamil, required some time to master them. When I faced any problem while producing musical features, it was to one of them that I promptly ran for advice.

Venkatarama Sastry and Sethuramiah were among the most sought after violinists of the day, frequently accompanying Ariyakudi, Semmangudi, Madurai Mani, G.N.B and the rest, not only in the AIR studios but at public concerts as well. Although both were disciples of the same guru, they had developed different individual styles of playing. Venkatarama Sastry played on the traditional five-stringed instrument while Sethuramiah had a seven-stringed instrument.

Both were perfect in whatever they rendered, but a discerning listener could trace a strict adherence to formality in Venkatarama Sastry and a desire for experimentation on the part of Sethuramiah. At the same time one agreed that both were melody incarnate with their fine, faultless technique.

One also noticed a behavioral difference between the duo. Venkatarama Sastry was soft spoken, reserved and mild mannered, while Sethuramiah was an extrovert freely indulging in conversation. They differed in looks too. Venkatarama Sastry was tall, dark and had the front of his head shaved and the rest of his hair gathered into a knot behind his head. Sethuramiah was short, fair, and had all his hair combed back into a tuft.

In those days, I had a fascination for the style of playing popularised by a particular school of North Indian violinists. They displayed a sort of nonchalance as they climaxed each piece they played with a blitzkrieg of cascading note in 'ati-drut' tempo.

It was this adroitness that had me spell-bound, wondering at the fingering skill of the players. Once Venkatarama Sastry and I were sitting in the studio lounge listening to one such violin performance on the loud speaker. I remarked, why one never found this thrilling virtuosity among violinists of the south. Venkatarama Sastry's reply was quiet, assured. He said any mature violinist could achieve that kind of effect, but in Carnatic music, melody mattered more than speed.

He took me to the studios and disillusioned me with a demonstration of the very gimmicks that had "thrilled" me till then!

Ganakala Shree for Mridangist

The awardee of the title, "Ganakala Shree", of the youth wing of Karnataka Ganakala Parishath, this year is C. Chaluviah (42), a mridangist of Bangalore.

This is the first time that a percussionist has been chosen for this title. This was decided at a meeting of the Karnataka Ganakala Parishat held at Ananya, Malleswaram, Bangalore recently.

Other names which figured prominently were: Veena vidwan D. Balakrishna (41, who missed last year also), mridangist T.S. Chandrashekar (42) and vocalist R.N. Srilatha (42).

Contribution of Haridasas to Music

R.K.Srikantan

To us, Music is seldom a matter of idle luxury. Music training formed an indispensable subject of royal education. Many were the rulers of Karnataka who were profound scholars in the theory and practice of this art. Many of them have written scholarly musical treatises and have bequeathed an imperishable legacy of such treatises to posterity. The royal patronage to music has been a continuous process in Karnataka.

Matanga (6th, 7th century AD), Sarangadeva (c.1230 AD), Parshvadeva (c.1310 AD), Kallinatha (c.1450 AD), Vidyaranya (c.1360 AD), the trinity of the 16th century, Karnataka-Nijaguna Shivayogi (c.1520 AD), Pundarika Vittala and Ramamatya (c.1550. AD) Somanatha, Govinda Dikshita, have all played important roles in the evaluation of the theoretical framework of music. Most of the important compositional patterns of today, such as the *kirana*, *varna*, *tillana* and *javali* are traceable to Kannada *Geya Prabandhas* which have been described by Matanga, Sarangadeva, Haripala, Kallinatha and others.

The classification of *melas* and *ragas* on scientific principles was left to Venkatamakhin, who was also a Kannadiga, to give shape to them in his famous *Chaturdandi Prakasika* in

about 1620 AD. He fixed the maximum number of *Melas* that were possible and his scheme remains unchallenged. King Tulajaji of Tanjore followed this scheme by writing his

“The contributions of Kannadigas to South Indian music and musicology have earned the gratitude of all the musicians and music lovers of our country. The Kannadigas have laboured unceasingly in all the fields of Carnatic music, so that the epithet “Karnataka Sangeeta” has come to describe forever, the music system of South India. So far as Carnatic music is concerned, it is the composers of Karnataka who enunciated and stabilised by illustrative practice, the canons of Karnataka Sangeeta as well as the formative and directive principles determining its aesthetic and physical structure”, says the writer.

Sangeeta Saramruta in about 1735 A.D. and he closely followed the scheme of Venkatamakhin. During the time of Tyagaraja, Dikshitar and Shyama Sastry, the 72 *Mela Karta* scheme had become an accepted system and Dikshitar in particular composed his songs in the new *Mela* system of Venkatamakhin.

The unbroken line of the Haridasa movement of combining music with bhakti, continued till the middle of the 19th century, the last two of this *Dasa Kuta* being Gopaladasa and Jagannathadasa. In Tanjore also, many of the court musicians were Kannadigas and the most important of these was Pachimiriam Adiyappayya

who was a contemporary of King Tulaja. Adiyappayya composed many *varnas* and *kritis* with the *Mudra* “Venkataramana”. His son, Krishnayya, was a great Veena Player

and an Adept in Tala. Mysore Sadashiva Rao was a younger contemporary of Tyagaraja. He belonged to Tyagaraja's direct *sisya parampara*, being a disciple of *Walajapet Venkataramana Bhagavatar*, a direct disciple of Tyagaraja. Among the modern composers in Karnataka, mention must be made of Veena Seshanna and Vasudevacharya. A few classical Kannada poets like Ponna, Ranna, Nagachandra, Rudra

Bhatta, Nemichandra, Ratnakaravarni, etc. have also enriched Carnatic Music through their works.

The Bhakti Movement

The Bhakti Movement in India, particularly in Karnataka, has to be viewed in its historical perspective in order to gauge its strength and weakness in the cultural life of our country. The era of Islamic ascendancy between 1001 to 1707 A.D. has been called the medieval period in Indian history. Large parts of India came under the rule of Islam. Culturally, it was a period of stagnation.

However, music entered a new phase with the advent of Islam. Balban and Raziya, were great patrons of music. Amir Khusrau was not only a musician but also an authority on the music of his time. He has described in detail the contemporary singers and various instruments in his writings. He was responsible for combining many Persian and Indian melodies. Some scholars feel that he invented the Sitar by combining the Indian Veena and the Persian Tambura. Anyhow, the Sitar is the product of the genius of the Indo-Muslim musicians. Similarly, the Indian mridanga, was modified to evolve the tabla. In the court of Jaunpur, the *Kheyal*, a style of Hindustani music developed. The Gwalior school was evolved under the patronage of Raja Mansingh of Gwalior who wrote "Manakutuhah", a work on music. Mansingh revived the *Drupad* style of Hindustani music and Baiji was a great singer at his court. *Qawali*, *Thumri* and *Ghazal* became popular in India due to the efforts of Muslim singers.

In the South, Carnatic Music was evolved in Vijayanagara. Vidyaranya is believed to be the originator of this school. Ramamatya and Purandara-dasa helped in its development.

On the ruins of the destroyed South Indian Hindu States was founded the Empire of Vijayanagar. It originated in 1336 on the banks of the Tungabhadra largely through the efforts of two energetic Hindu youths, Harihara and Bukka. Vijayanagar was responsible for all-round progress in the field of religion and fine arts. The peace and prosperity fostered by the Empire helped to further cultural activities. The Empire also extended generous patronage to all these pursuits. Rightly, the Empire has been regarded as representing the "synthesis of South Indian Culture".

Bhakti Cult and Movement

The growth of the Bhakti cult was a natural reaction to the spread of Islam. It consisted of a loving devo-

tion to one God and it is considered as one of the ways of realising God. Bhakti cult was very ancient and the *Bhagavad Gita* preaches such a devotion. But it assumed great importance in the medieval ages in an attempt to safeguard Hindu Dharma. The cult is essentially monotheistic in the sense that though the devotees worship Siva or Krishna or Devi, they stand for one God.

Bhakti cult was revived first in South India due to the efforts of Saivite and Vaishnavite saints. Ramanuja, Vibhaditya, Basava and Madhva popularised this cult. The spread of the *Bhakti* cult from the South to the North was heralded by its early flowering in Maharashtra, which lies midway. That the Hindu society had not completely lost its vigour and vitality was made clear by the rise of this movement which helped to meet the problems raised by religious crisis.

Bhakti, intense devotion, is one of the three paths to attaining salvation according to Hindu belief. The other two courses are *jnana* and *karma*. The cult of *bhakti* flowered in the epics and the puranas and through them evolved a popular movement. Leaders of the bhakti movement were mystic saints. The cult of bhakti formed the vital part of the religious culture of Karnataka. The rule of the Kalachuri Bijjala is important for the revival of Saivism in the new form called Veerasaivism or Lingayatism. Basava was the greatest exponent of this new form of Veerasaivism. He preached his religion in the language of the region. The doctrines of bhakti have already been propounded in the Upanishads. But much emphasis began to be laid on bhakti movement in the 11th and 12th centuries AD. This continued for four centuries thereafter. There was then a lacunae of about a century. The 17th century witnessed a revival and then set in a decline. Thus, it spread over five centuries.

The unique character of the teachings of these Haridasas lies in the fact that they exerted powerful religious

influence on the mass consciousness. Their songs were composed in easy colloquial language in contrast with the authors of the Tamil Thevaram and Prabandham literature whose style was highly literary. The authors of these songs were well-versed in Sanskrit and Philosophy. The tenets, even the learned ones, were sung in simple and intelligible verses. They also differed from the Vaishnava lyricists of Bengal who indulged in erotic forms of personal devotion to God.

Bhakti through Music

The impact of music on human beings is intensely spiritual, aesthetic and emotional. The former predominates in classical music and the latter in other varieties, which may be described as LCM (Light Classical Music). The essential characteristic of classical music is its concern with technique governed by the rules and conventions of the art, the enforcement of the grammatical discipline and the achievement of a total effect which yields an aesthetic satisfaction in the listener. The Haridasas of Karnataka were the pioneers in South India in spreading bhakti through music by composing songs in the form of kirtanas, suladis, ughabhogas, etc. The secret of the popularity of their compositions lay in the fact that they were couched in Kannada which could be understood by the masses. The trend in composition between the era of Sarangadeva and the popular kirtanakas who made enduring contributions in the regional languages from about the 14th to the 18th centuries, was largely a movement away from the dominance of an intricate variety of rigid classical forms, towards freedom in expression, a simplification in structure and the deliberate use of music to project the thought of the song-maker. The ramifications of the prabandha with its six angas, and their innumerable permutation were gradually getting replaced by a new harmony in fashioning the basic designs in the art of compositions. The old order could be

seen in this long period of transition, yielding place to a new one which transformed the shape of the composition in a wonderful variety of ways, giving rise to a charming profusion of new forms in response to the urges of creative art.

The kirtana form was congenial to the new requirements and its intensive application led up to the kritis and padams of the great masters on the one side and also, in another direction, to the development of song-types which came to be employed as hand-maids of expression in a devotional setting, dramatic narration and dialogue thus heightening the element of entertainment. It was in this manner that the javali, the tillanna, the taranga, devarnama and ragamalika emerged to enrich the resources of Carnatik music. Madhavacharya brought the cult of bhakti to perfection by propagating his theory of dvaita. His philosophy was developed by his immediate disciples.

The Role of Haridasas

During the Vijayanagar period, the Dasakuta began to flourish and eminent devotees like Purandaradasa and Kanakadasa were some of the prominent personalities of the kuta. The Haridasas of Karnataka belong to the holy lineage of wandering mendicant ascetics for whom our country has been justly as famous from time immemorial as for her religious myths and legends. The bhakti movement in Karnataka was essentially a Madhva movement. Mainly drawing inspiration from the teachings of the Acharyas, these saints tried to make Hindu religion popular by singing songs of devotion at the doors of the rich and the poor alike. The Haridasas were also believers in the value of Nama Sankirtana or the efficacy of meditation by means of the name of the Lord as a means to attain salvation.

The works of the Haridasas are varied and numerous. The number of their songs available to us runs to many thousands. They are

characterised by a happy blend of music and poetry. They composed songs in a variety of meters, viz., *Pada, suladi, Ugabhoga, Tatva, Suvali, Sloka, Kanda, Vachana, Gadya, Seesapadya, Vrita, Dvipadi, Tripadi, Chaupadi, Saptadi, Ashtapadi, Ragale, Yalapada*, etc. The Haridasas were first and foremost the followers of Vittala or Panduranga. The names of nearly 200 Haridasas are known, including female Haridasas. The works of the Haridasas of Karnataka constitute a magnificent collection of songs known as Dasarapada or Devarnama. Starting with Narahari Tirtha in the 13th century down to Jagannathadasa in the 18th century, these saintly bards enriched not only the bhakti literature of our country but also made substantial contributions to our musical system. Purandaradasa is the most celebrated amongst them. His works are marked by a charming and scintillating excellence of sahitya and sangeeta and they stand out as typical examples of the devarnama group of compositions.

Devaranama Kirtanas

The devarnama kirtana consists of the *pallavi*, the *anupallavi* and usually several charanas set in popular ragas and talas. The musical arrangement is easy and fluent and the rendering concentrates on the portrayal of the inherent bhava. Each Dasa is distinguished by his own independent title or mudra. Among these Haridasas, Purandaradasa and Kanakadasa hold a prominent place in the cultural history of Karnataka. Both of them were saints and literary geniuses. Purandaradasa was a master of the theory and practice of the science of music, a religious teacher and a humanist. It was given to him to consolidate the Dasakutta and ensure its continuity in the social life of his countrymen. It is the spirit and the moving qualities of the compositions of these great saints that make them universally respected and immortal.

Purandaradasa's Contribution

At the hands of Purandaradasa, these compositions reached the acme of perfection and attained the status of classical music compositions which served as models even to giants like Tyagaraja. Thus, they formed the most significant corpus of musical compositions in the history of Carnatic Music.

Purandaradasa is revered as the *Karnataka Sangeeta Pitamaha*. This appellation is indicative of his connection with the development of Carnatic music, because not with standing the absence of any written record, this appellation has been in use for generations. But very little material is available about his association with music or contribution, if any, in its development. And the reason for this is, for generations, Purandaradasa has been revered more as a saint than as a composer. And also very little attention was paid by his spiritual heirs to the musical merits of his songs. As a consequence, much of the music of his songs is lost and we are left only with the skeletons of their word structures.

In addition to this, there is also another belief that Purandaradasa was responsible for devising the present-day preliminary training lessons in music. While a couple of *Geetas* attributed to him are available, no *prabandha* or *thaya* said to have been composed by him are available. We have of course a large number of *suladi, ugabhoga, pada* and *padya*. Music has been utilised by Purandaradasa and others to intensify the beauty of the structure and the sentiment behind the songs. As such, there are no compositions exclusively in praise of sangeetha. But Purandaradasa brought into practice the scheme of *pallavi, anupallavi* and *charana* of a musical composition. Nearly 30 songs contain reference to music including instruments and the qualifications of musicians etc.

In one particular songs, he mentions many instruments that were in vogue in his times, like the *tambura kombu, flute*, etc. This spiritual excel-

lence of music is stressed in *ugabhoga* where reference is made to the *tambura*, *tala*, *gejje* and singing and their importance in leading to *moksha*. In one of his *suladis*, he alludes to *mandara*, *madhya* and *tala sthayis*.

Numerous references to ragas, possibly in vogue during his times, have been made by Purandaradasa in some of his songs. For instance, mention is made of the ragas, *Ramakri*, *Gundakri* and *Maharanjini Ahiri*, *Kambhoji*, *Gurjari*, *Gundakriya*, *Deshakshi*, *Shankarabaranam*, *Sri Bhoopali*, *Bhairavi*, *Vasantha*, etc. and also the ragas that came later, like *Kalyani*, *Paadi*, *Poorivikalyani*, *Gowri* and *Saranga*. Ragas like *Kalyani* and *Darbar* with Persian influence were popularised by the Dasas. The *suladi sapta talas* were perfected and brought into practice. Purandaradasa has emphasised the necessity of a good voice for the vocalist. It will be clear from the study of the songs that he was a very leaned musician. To him, we owe the initial systematisation of Carnatic Music, so much so, all the famous ragas of today bear the same complexion as they did in his time. As he was a master of both *lakshya* and *lakshana*, it was possible for him not only to give the correct shape to the raga but also to compose many a *kirtana* to serve as illustrations.

The Sangeeta Saramruta of Tulaja Maharaja gives numerous examples of Purandaradasa's *suladis* to illustrate raga features. The later composers have followed his patterns in raga delineation, structure and tempo, the three features which make the body and soul of a song. It is difficult to assess the authenticity of the tunes now attributed to Purandaradasa. There is no traceable lineage of disciples or notational script for the melodies.

The *kirtanas*, are, as a rule, simpler compositions, intended for group singing. Their main features are, firstly, the tunes are easy to sing and do not call for great expertise. Secondly, they are usually set within a single octave, thirdly, they have no

sangati embellishments, and fourthly, even where the *charanams* are a little difficult. The *pallavi* is always simple so that while the leader sings the *charanams*, the chorus can intone the *pallavi* at the conclusion of each of the couplets. The *kirtanas* are their appeal is a combined one, in equal measure of religious devotion and musical delight. One may say that while in the *kriti*, the words serve the song, in the *kirtana*, the tune serves the words. The whole credit of rescuing Karnataka Sangeeta from being corrupted due to foreign invasions, belongs to Purandaradasa. The main outlines of about all the ragas have been laid down by him in clear terms. Purandaradasa occupies the same position in Kannada literature which *Tulsidas* occupies in Hindi. They can hardly be surpassed so far as their literary ability and poetic genius are concerned. His songs are an imperishable part of the literary and musical heritage of Karnataka.

Vyasa Thirtha (14478-1538 AD) was the guru of Purandaradasa. He had Purandara, Venkatadasa, Kanaka, Vadiraja, Vijayendra and others as his disciples. Vadiraja (180-1600 AD) was a philosopher cum *dasa*, Ramagadya, Vaikunta varanane, Gundakriya, Lakshmisobhanehadu, *suladi* and *ugabhogas* are some of his compositions. His *mudra* is Hayavadana.

Kanaka Dasa

The next luminary in the galaxies of Dasas is Kanakadasa, a contemporary of Purandara. A shepherd by birth, he is an example like Vidura of the Mahabharata. Vyasaraaja held him in great esteem. Mohana Tarangini, Haribhaktisara, Nalacharitre are some of his outstanding works. Kanaka Mundige is particular type of his compositions, "full of abstract imagery, subtlety of metaphysics and inscrutable implications". The *mudrika* of his compositions is Adikeshava.

Vijaya Dasa

Vijaya Dasa (1687-1765 AD) was a native of Chikalaparavi in Raichur

district. He suffered from extreme poverty and distress. His *suladis* are full of Sanskritisms. "So diverse are the themes" writes Dr M.V. Krishna Rao "So sublime is the spiritual content and so elegant and graceful is the expression of the compositions that among the Haridasas, Purandara and Vijayadasa stand prominent as most distinguished *kirtanakas*."

Jagannatha Dasa

Most distinguished after Vijayadasa, was Jagannatha Dasa (1726-1809 AD), the author of *Harikathamrtasara*. It is a mine of information with many theological secrets, the sources of which are inscrutable. He is the last among the great Dasas in whom *Vyasatva* and *Dasatva* combined. He is the author of many *suladis* and *ugabhogas*. His *mudrika* is "Jagannatha Vittala".

It has been recognised that music, though often used for amusing sensual delights and pleasures, should subserve the function of bringing poise and order to the soul. Music has played an important role in social cohesion and integration through the ages in close association with feasts, dances, rituals and games. It is a more accurate and intimate mirror of the travails and victories of the lone human soul than any other fine-art. When thought is brought to bear on experience regarding the influence of art on the individual or the community, it becomes clear that the influence of art on the common good is a very real one.

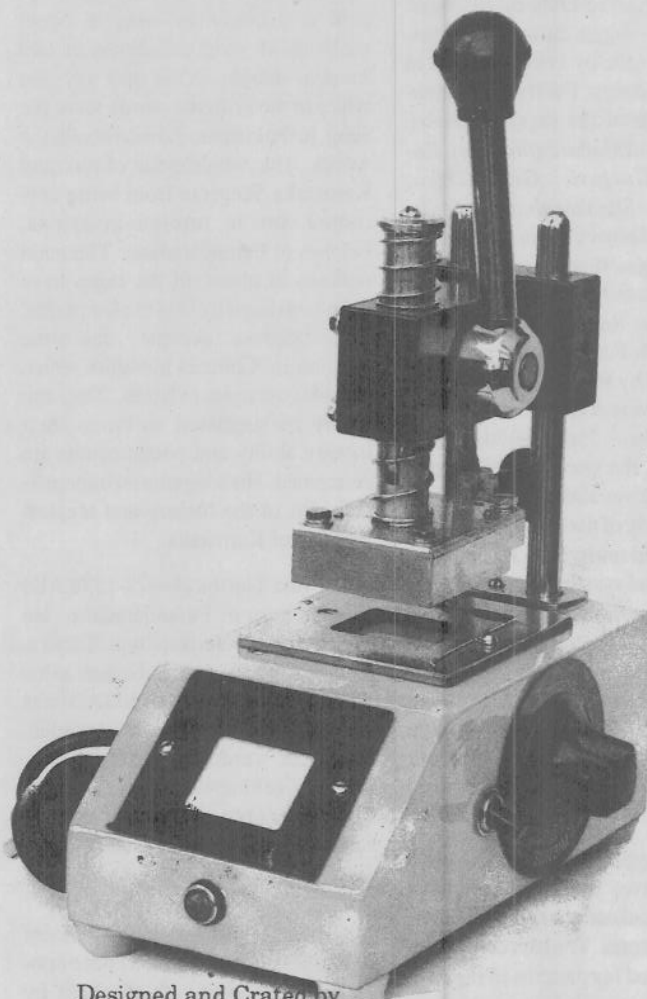
India abounds in music belonging to the realms of art-music, sacred-music, opera music, dance-music and folk-music. She is equally rich in art-dance, sacred-dance and folk-dance. The training of our sense discrimination and of intelligent appreciation of real qualities of arts is of paramount importance. Art is not just there to decorate our walls and to give easy pleasure. It wants to construct, to create new values, but there are times when in order to do so, it must destroy false values and clear building space.

No More Buckling while Mounting your Transparencies

Super Seal 101

Professional Card Board Mounting Unit

- Heavy Duty
- Thermostat
Controlled
- Illumination
for
Slide Viewing
- Sleek
Streamlined
Construction
- Attractive
Colours
to Decorate
Modern
Lab System



Designed and Crated by

FOTO Image

138 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009 © 2263696

Dealers: Photo Speed Co, Brigade Road, Bangalore 560001 © 5580505: R.K. Photo Guide, 5th Main Road, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009: Graphic Instruments, 12A State Bank Street, Anna Salai, Madras 600002 © 845309: Sangam Electronics, M-11 Palika Bazar, Connaught Place, New Delhi 110001 © 332 2090: Jitens, B-3/7 MCH Market, Chikkadapally, Hyderabad 500020 © 040-633043

LAKSHMI JEWELLERY COMPANY

Manufacturing Jewellers for over 55 years

Dealers in:

Precious and Semi Precious Stones

Manufacturers of:

Shields, Trophies, Lapel Badges and Medals

LAKSHMI JEWELLERY COMPANY

NAGARTHPET, BANGALORE 560002

© 2212635 Estd 1940



Vaishnavi
RANGE
with Designers Tussles

Radhakrishna
Silks & Crepes

Choice of over
50 Designs
to choose

Manufactured and Marketed by:
Radhakrishna & Co.
Bangalore 560 002
Phone: 2213748, 2241567

Available in all
leading Stores in
India and abroad

OPTION

Phoenix

JOURNAL ON MUSIC & DANCE

September 96

Rs 5-00



INTRODUCING A NEW DIMENSION TO IMAGING TECHNOLOGY

..... A Professional Course in Photography,
Photo Finishing and Photo Lab Management

The continuously growing demand for skilled mini-lab technicians and Lab Managers will soon be fulfilled.

The Institute of Imaging Technology introduces a short term professional course to impart intensive training in the various aspects of Photography, Photo finishing and Photo Lab Management.

The brainchild of Nippon Group, who have rich experience in marketing Konica products in India and successfully operating a chain of Konica Color Labs in the South, the Institute of Imaging Technology is promoted as a premier centre for professional education of this sort.



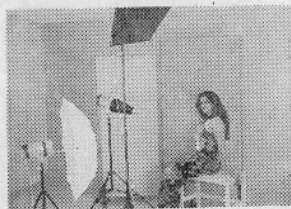
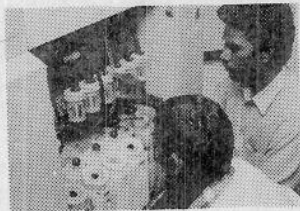
Housed in a spacious, air-conditioned facility, and equipped with a Studio and Library, this is the first of its kind in India, providing a great opportunity to learn the nuances of the art.

The 3 - week course is designed to create scientifically trained technicians and management personnel.

The syllabus covers

- Intensive theory on Photography, Photo Finishing and Lab Management
- Hands-on training using the latest Konica Nice Print system - and
- Demonstration through sophisticated training and evaluation aids

**Enrol today, Rise to become
an entrepreneur on your own merit!**

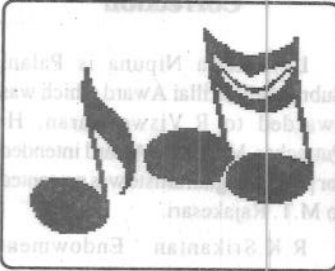


For more details, contact



INSTITUTE OF IMAGING TECHNOLOGY

8 A, Bragathambal Street, Nungambakkam, Madras-600 034 Telephone : 8233656 Fax : 044-499 1071 / 499 2351



PHOENIX

Journal on Music and Dance

S.N.Chandrasekhar
67 Basappa Layout
Bangalore 560019 © 6675758
Editor

Bangalore K Venkatram
183, 8th Cross, II Bl, Jayanagar
Bangalore 560011 © 6630079
Associate Editor

N.Sundarraaj
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009 © 2263696
Managing Editor

B. Rajashekar
© 2216459
Advertising Manager

Representatives
Ganapathi Bhat
Hubli -Dharwar.
K. Ramamurthy Rao
Mysore
Geeta Raja
9 Chhaya, Jam-e-Jamshed Road
Matunga, Bombay 400019
© 412 2074

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00
Three Years: Rs 140-00

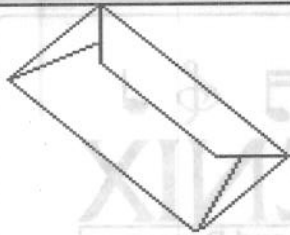
Please send all remittances to
PHOENIX
The Circulation Manager
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009 © 2263696
(Cheques to be drawn on
'PHOENIX')

RN 45468/87

Vol 1 September 1996 No 12

4	Readers' Write
5	Editorial-A Disturbing Trend
6	Calling AIR
8	Make up of a Green Room
9	Frenzy of Festivals
10	Deftly Combining a Dual Role
11	Where are We Heading?
13	Genial Vainika
14	Mumbai Festival
15	Devnandan Fest
16	From Here & There
17	Cassette Causerie
18	Know your Artistes

Cover Photo by
N.SUNDARRAJ



READERS Write

Vidya Dadhathi Vinayam

The July-August issue of Phoenix has just reached me. The picture on the outer cover is a speaking likeness of the great gentleman. His pen portrait by SNC on page 14 is superb. It brings out the essence of the music and melody which are synonymous with Veena Doreswamy Iyengar.

The truism 'Vidya Dhadathi Vinayam' is nowhere seen as clearly as in our illustrious artiste. Yet I would with the box in which you have printed this article on pages 14 and 15 was not shadowed or shaded as it in no way improves the get up. Instead you could have decorated the edges with veena mala design and used ordinary black on white. It would have been clearer. No doubt you meant well.

Kusuma Rao, Bangalore

Magnificent Exposure

Story on Prathibha Prahlad (June 96) is superb. No other magazine in our country is giving such a magnificent exposure to our artistes as Phoenix.

Prathibha's contribution to dance and dancers is unique.

A.S.Madhavarao, Udipi

Empty Halls

Apropos to the letter by Anantharam of Bangalore (July August 96) regarding filling up programmes with artistes outside Karnataka.

I fully support his views to give opportunities to local artistes. But in most of the concerts of local artistes listeners are very few. The concert hall, though small, is never full.

The number of good performing artistes in our State is very less. Hence the organisers are left with no choice but to depend on artistes from other States.

Venkateshan, Bangalore

Enjoyable Calling AIR

I am a regular reader of PHOENIX since its first issue. And I must say that I enjoy reading it, especially the 'Calling AIR' by ESSENCE. We have been regularly reading the reviews of concerts regularly in newspapers. Most of the reviews are biased and do not have many persons who can present unbiased reviews.

But, the 'Calling AIR' is a welcome change from the regular stuff though, sometimes is a bit harsh.

Keep it up.

K.R.Sundareshan, Madras

Kumar Gandharva

'A Visit to Kumar Gandharva' (July 96) is very touching. Karnataka Government should come forward to preserve the tapes by converting them into CD's. Karnataka born artiste of repute deserves much more.

Snageetha Nrithya Academy and Karnataka Ganakala Parishat should join hands and support this project.

S.S.Deshpande, Pune

Correction

Laya Kala Nipuna is Palani Subramanya Pillai Award which was awarded to R. Visweswaran. H. Puttchar Memorial Award intended for pre-parangath artiste was presented to M.T. Rajakesari.

R.K.Srikantan Endowment programme was the symposium on Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer and not the concert of Maharajapuram Srinivasan. This concert was sponsored by the Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer Trust.

N.Sundarraaj

Fusion

It is gratifying to note that PHOENIX is spreading its tentacles to other states (Mid Summer Musical Marvel).

Fusion between Karnataka and Tamilnadu should be stronger.

Suresh, Chitradurga

Informative

The July - August 96 issue has enthralled me. The article on Haridasa's contribution to Music by R.K. Srikantan is very informative and educative.

Dayanand, Mumbai

Attention Organisers

Music and dance institutions are requested to send their programmes to

The Editor, PHOENIX, 138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009, before the first week of the month.

Editorial

CALLING AIR A Disturbing Trend

Some of the Ranga-Praveshas (Arangetrams) in recent times have revealed a disturbing trend. In them pomp and opulence are seemingly taking precedence over aesthetic considerations. The ostentation that marked these events may well scare away pecuniarily less fortunate parents of talented youngsters from the art itself.

In one such instance as many as 16 persons, including accompanying musicians and other professional helpers were felicitated with momentoes, shawls and other accessories. That is besides the customary fees befitting the occasion. The debutante involved was a fatherless girl who could ill afford to fritter away her resources. The only consolation is that the Guru in this case was single sans the encumbrance of a wife and a father to add to the list of beneficiaries.

In two other cases, like in a couple of them in Shimoga around the same time, the agenda included sumptuous dinner befitting a wedding repast. All these are apparently in keeping with the Joneses, i.e. visiting NRIs for whom such events are an opportunity for a get-together with family and friends. They come in handy to do away with formal individual visits. If the other incidentals like theatre rental, stage decor, brochure, video, photographing, publicity etc., are added the amount could easily meet the expenses of an upper middle class marriage !

And all this for a debutante who may or may not take to dance seriously. But its repercussions on the one who is really talented, more serious and doesn't have the means could be utterly disastrous.

It is here that our academies, departments of culture, and youth services and the zonal centres can play a constructive role. As it is they earmark sizeable budgets to sponsor programmes by aspiring youngsters. A part of that outlay could be set apart to fund the Ranga Praveshas of deserving, indigent aspirants. That would be certainly more purposeful than many of the other so-called promotional activities. At any rate, it would not be less productive than the bestowal of the countless, unmonitored scholarships being doled out by the State Sangeet-Nritya Academy !

S.N.Chandrasekhar



CALLING AIR



Kavitha and Triveni Saralaya

Pantuvarali is one of the most commonly heard ragas on the concert stage. Hence it is not easy to make an instant appeal. But when a seasoned vocalist like R.K. Srikantan renders it, it attains a flavour all its own. With his well-preserved voice, honed perfectly to sruti the airing itself could be absorbing as one experienced in his recital on July 1, 8-30 a.m.

After the total gestalt in the alap,



Shakunthala Narasimhan

the popular kriti Sarasakshaparipalaya was effusive with a crisp 'niraval' and enlivening 'swaraprasthara' adorning the rendition. What a heart warming treat to start a day with!

On the previous morning, again 8.30 a.m. it was the Saralaya Sisters (Kavita and Triveni) who were on the air. Their alap for Shankarabharana was marked for its clarity, though falling short in its enduring quality. But the stately kriti Enduku Peddala anchored well to the lilting gait to leave a lingering effect. The way the duo handled the swaraprasthara between them was as impactful as it was refreshing.

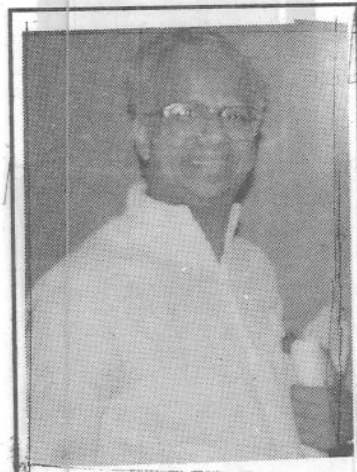
Pushpa Kashinath's veena recital (July 1, 9.30 a.m.) was as reposeful. If Nalinakanti just revealed a tranquil mood, Pushpa's Kalyani (Etavunara) was full of verve, verily affirmative of her grip on the instrument and the modal frame. The flowing 'swaraprasthara' embellishing the rendition enhanced its aural beauty.

A facile, tuneful voice enabled Vinayak Torvi (July 5, 8.30 a.m)

to sing with ease. As he meditatively started to intonate Bhairav, his searching mind surfaced, 'Balamava' the bandish in vilambit exfoliating with a flurry of racy 'sargams'. 'Darashanadevo', the drut ang was as lucid in its articulation to project a compact picture of the solemn raga.

The Kambodi piece Rangasayi by Kovaladi Kala assumed its sonority more due to the flourishes that marked the violin accompaniment of M. Nagaraj. No doubt, the young vocalist has a trained voice that traverses beyond two octaves with felicity. But she has yet to learn using it to achieve resonant exactitude. It is here M.K. Chenakeshava (July 6, 8.30) revels. He has a voice that is honed to sruti as evidenced in his Shuddha Dhanyasi (Entanerchina). The rendition stood out for its tonal flourishes. But, sadly, they don't sound original, shades of Balamurali Krishna's sonority manifest in each and every sonant!

The veena concert of M.K. Saraswati (10-10 a.m July 7) justified the reputation she has built for herself in a distinguished career. It was packed with a few familiar melodies, a racy Ramachandra (Vasantha) giving her a sunny start. Varali (Mamava Meenakshi) and Shahana (Giripai) were the two ragas to receive a sustained attention. In either case the trite 'sangatis' flowed with resonant exac-



T.V. Shankaranarayan



Pushpa Kashinath

titude, the famed kritis acquiring a special delight due to the taut rhythm.

Padma Gurudutt (8.30 a.m. July 8) was in as reposeful a mood as she balmily intonated Shankarabharana (Nagalingam). The alap itself was coaxed with an array of saucy 'sangatis' to facilitate a meaningful deployment for the infrequently heard kriti.

The evocation in S. Shankar's recital (8.30 a.m. July 10) was exhilarating. If the Khamas piece helped him to bring about a true concert atmosphere, in Mukhari (Enta Ninne) his voice grew deeper and stronger to lend free reign to his manodharma. It was easy to see that Shankar has acquired an enduring capacity to captivate his listeners with enviable ease and efficiency. The violin solo by K.V. Raja Iyengar that followed (9.30 a.m) was on predictable lines, pleasing sans the sparkle that one looks for in a senior artiste like him. His Ganamurthe (name of the raga too) was true to the form.

That night from Madras (9.15 p.m) one chanced to hear a memorable concert, T.V. Shankaranarayan flanked by M.S. Gopalakrishnan on the violin

and Vellore Ramabhadran on mridangam. An ideal trio indeed. Shankararayan's voice was at its best, his inspired rendition flowing mellifluously from the invocatory Nata piece itself. The number in Veera Vasantha was enriched by some sparkling 'swaraprasthara'. The alap for Kalyani was a full-throated essay, the respected vocalist using his resonant tonality

to arrive at a pleasing imagery of the melody. Etavunara, the kriti was redolent with fine touches, a sleek 'niraval' and spacious 'swara' passages adding glitter to the rendition. Veteran MSG was in as fine a mettle, lending excellent support to the vocalist, himself complementing with measured and pleasing touches. Ramabhadran's sensitive percussive support enhanced the rhythmic overtones in the edifying recital.

Two rare kritis of Thyagaiaha, Pappam (Murcha) and Muripemu Galige (Mukhari) lent an enlivening touch to Shakuntala Narasimhan's recital on July 11 (9.15 a.m). Her voice modulation, thanks to her felicity in the

Hindustani style added to the aural impact in the rendition. Ramapriya (Matange) revelled with some tantalising 'sangatis' in the upper reaches, the kriti delineated with customary flourish.

R.A. Ramamani has the telling capacity to bring essence in a raga. Her essay for Simhendramadhyama (Ninne Nammiti) was characteristic with a trained voice that aligns perfectly with 'sruti', Rama lent a dignified touch to a raga, a fleeting feeling highlighting the rendition in the popular Vasudevacharya kriti. Bhairavi (Raksha Bittare) was as elaborate in its aural edifice, the enunciation heightened with some lilting touches. The kriti was embellished with a full array of 'sargams' in sarvalagu. Sustained support by the staffers as accompanists was a special feature of the concert.

Geeta Murthy's vocal on the following day (8.30 a.m) was also in an upbeat mood, though the sruti seemed a wee bit non-cooperative. But the form in her Vachaspati (Pahijagajjananii) was convincing.

The Hindustani vocal by Parameshwar Hegde, one of the senior students of Basavaraj Rajguru, at once revealed that he has a trained voice.



M.K. Saraswathi

His Kausi-Kanada (Rajanake Kripa) as it progressed in its sonorous alap grew with proper Nyasa and phraseology. The 'bandish' was chiselled with lovely taans, a quick denouement in the faster tempo leaving a fleeting feeling on the listener.

The South Zone hook-up on July 21 (10 p.m) was a surprise packet, Rohini Venkatachalam, the vocalist was ably supported by Vanamala Dikshit on the violin. If the Begade piece Vallabhanayakasya provided a pleasant start, it was reinforced with a chaste, but brief alap for Vachaspati (Kantachudu). The pick of the concert was the balanced representation Rohini gave to Shankarabharana. The kriti Shankaracharya was redolent with a neat 'niraval' and spacious

swara passages.

Shanmukhapriya was the mainstay in the veena recital of V.Veena (July 22, 8.30 a.m). Though the alap itself did not offer much by way of melodic delight, the kriti Marivere glowed with some elegant cadences. An unpardonable fax paus in the announcement marked the opening of V. Chitra's vocal recital later at 9.30 a.m. The name of the raga of Paramukha is Kanada, not Kannada as announced. The rendition itself could not do full justice to the popular GNB composition. But Chitra's voice attained an emotional touch as she intoned the line Niradharamu. That impact was, however, short lived as neither the alap for Saveri nor the familiar Kannada pada Parakumaadade could

vouch for a sustained technique.

Ananda-bhairavi (Manasa Guruguna) showed Suma Sudheendra (July 2, 8.30 a.m) in good fettle. The alap itself was marked for its precision, the kriti glorying in the famous 'Gopuchayati' foray. But Purvikalyani was not as convincing, having had to depend on the kriti (Meenakshim) for its credible design.

V.Kalavati's Shanmukhapriya had a dignified aura with meaningful stasis in the upper reaches. The lovely kriti Abhimanamuto was as emotional in its denouement, glorying in the effusion of lilting 'sangatis'. The rare devotional Rogaharana (Bageshri) was enjoyable due to its lyrical fidelity.

ESSENCE

Subscribe to

PHOENIX

It reaches you by post every month with no extra cost

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00

Three Years: Rs 140-00

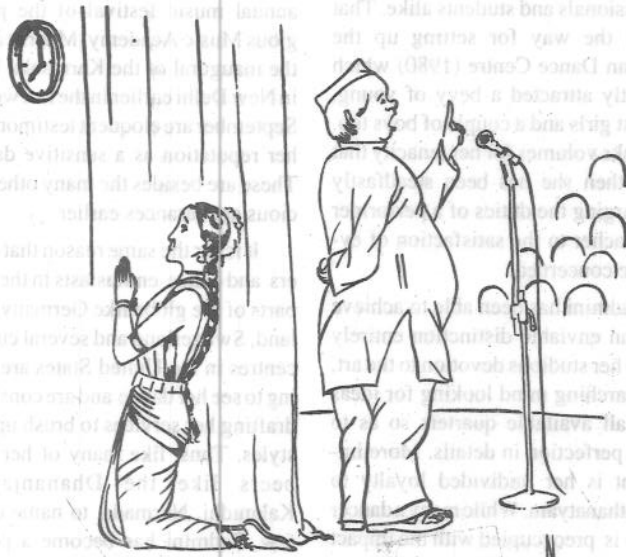
to be sent to:

The Circulation Manager, PHOENIX
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009

In Lighter Vein

Frenzy of Festivals

Manu Vijay



Do you have a festival programme? You are now entitled to square your shoulders and strut a little, and oh! so politely, invite friends and foes alike to please witness the event.

'I'd love to have you,' Such is the esteem with which dancers hold festival programmes, vying with each other to perform in the pick of the season. And as Indians, we are festive the year round.

We have festivals for festivals - and celebrate Pongal, Ramanavami, Ugadi, Diwali, Dashera, Ganesh Chaturthi and what have you? Why! A festival every month of course!

We have festivals to celebrate the season-Vasanth habba, for instance festivals are organised at historical monuments to promote tourism -

Pattadakal, Hampi, Somanathpur, Badami, Mysore, Tala Cauvery - and all the tourism we have, is the entire artistic fraternity from Bangalore.

We have government festivals and non-government festivals - the former usually in dull, drab, areas, and the latter, full of sparkle and glamour, and yes, pots of money.

The non-government types can be further classified into two - the cigarette festivals and the non-cigarette festivals, the former again out-glamour the latter. Next time you have a smoke, remember a small part of the revenue, probably funds a musician or dancer. In addition, we have festivals with speeches and speeches with festivals - the latter are more popular with politicians and academicians

and the former with the dancers.

Festivals can also be technically classified - music cum dance festivals, dance drama festivals, solo dance festivals, modern dance festivals and so on. There are festivals with lectures, with seminars, festivals for the young, festivals for the old.

We have the well known festivals - Khajuraho, Surya, or an entire season of festivals as in Madras. We have failed, I think, in enumerating the most common sort - just festivals-festivals for no apparent rhyme or reason, occasion or season - just to have a festival!

In the mad frenzy of festivals, month after month, year after year, in the maze of dancers, performances, new items, experiments, innovations, and creations, I've forgotten to mention a basic ingredient. To be 'festive' of course - to breathe in the air of incense and jasmine, to live a few moments amongst the rustle of silks, and the strains of the tanpura, and peacefully coexist in atmosphere of artistic camaraderie and companionship.*

Next Issue

Cover Story on
Bangalore K Venkatram
Tuneful Encounters
Calling Air
Manu's In Lighter Vein
Know your artistes
and
Editorial

Padmini Ravi:

Deftly Combining a Dual Role

S.N.Chandrashekar

When a dancer at the apex of her career as a performer takes to teaching, one tends to be a little sceptical of the venture. An inevitable busy schedule, one fears, may seldom permit her to be regular in her duties as a tutor. Besides, few artistes are known to effectively combine in themselves the dual role. For, the ability to teach presupposes not only the expertise of a performer, but also a sound and rational understanding of the idiom. Only then can it facilitate communication which is so essential to be a successful teacher.

One dancer who subscribes to such a proposition is Padmini Ravi, one of the senior-most artistes of the State. In her case it must be conceded that the two dispensations began almost simultaneously. That is when marriage made this graceful dancer shift her abode from Madras to Bangalore. That was two decades ago, in 1970 to be exact. Before that, as a senior student of K.J. Sarasa she had made a name as a competent dancer. The filial bond between the Guru and her prime disciple was so strong that even after Padmini settled down in her new home, Sarasa made it a custom to be present every time Padmini performed or introduced a student through a 'ranga pravesha'. She delighted to support either in Nattuvangam.

But initially, the conjugal compulsions had prevented Padmini from giving as much time to dance as she would wish. The result was frustration. The only therapy was dance. She was able to overcome the depression and the consequent ennui only after she resumed dancing.

Her very first appearance in the

City heralded Padmini's inherent talents and won laurels from professionals and students alike. That paved the way for setting up the Pradhan Dance Centre (1980) which instantly attracted a bevy of young, earnest girls and a couple of boys too. It speaks volumes for her tenacity that since then she has been steadfastly discharging the duties of a performer and teacher to the satisfaction of everyone concerned.

Padmini has been able to achieve such an enviable distinction entirely due to her studious devotion to the art, her searching mind looking for ideas from all available quarters so as to attain perfection in details. More important is her undivided loyalty to Bharathanatyam. While many a dancer to day is preoccupied with the impact of the whole, Padmini can be seen triumphing in subtle nuances, her outings marked for precision in line and rhythm.

Indeed, seldom can one find such exactitude in the all important 'aramandi' stance, the full gravity of which is not easily maintainable due to the increasing complex Adavus that complement it. But its ability to lend strength and character to the form can never be over-emphasised.

The other virtue in Padmini is fluidity. It is this special characteristic, flexion-filled, langrous angikas that make Padmini's dance a wondrous spectacle. A Nritha with such attributes could be a near treat and if a dancer is endowed with a command on her 'mukhija' as it is often in Padmini's abhinaya, the result can be a class apart.

No wonder she has been recognised as one of the top artistes in

the genre today. The coveted invitation to her to dance in the ensuing annual music festival of the prestigious Music Academy, Madras and in the inaugural of the Karnataka Utsav in New Delhi earlier in the last week of September are eloquent testimonies to her reputation as a sensitive dancer. These are besides the many other precious appearances earlier.

It is for the same reason that dancers and dance enthusiasts in the other parts of the globe like Germany, Holland, Switzerland and several cultural centres in the United States are craving to see her dance and are constantly drafting her services to brush up their styles. Thus, like many of her compeers like the Dhananjayans, Kalanidhi, Narmada, to name only a few, Padmini has become a peripatetic performer-teacher of international repute which is as it should be.

As she confesses, it has become a hectic schedule, and challenging as far as fixing priorities is concerned. But it is not without its own edifying prospect of nurturing many talent, an endeavour that has given her immense pleasure and satisfaction. Already there are among her local students names that have made a grade like the Kirans (Sandhya and Subramaniam), Nivedita, Nandita, Hema, Hamsni, Preeti, her own daughter Lakshmi whose proficiency in Nattuvangam is unquestionable, and many others. With her unsinted approach, there is no doubt that she would soon add some more names to the list from across the seas. They will ensure a continuity of the illustrious line of Pradhan Dance Centre. That is a contribution that should do proud to any artiste worth the name! ■

Where are We Headidng?

Padmini Ravi

People at the beginning of Thretayuga were leading a mixed life of misery and happiness subjecting themselves to the elemental passion of lust, greed and musuilanity. So in order to inculcate into them the spirit of adhering to the just way of life, Brahma was approached and the Natya Veda was created in the hope of creating intellectual advancement and leading people towards righteousness and proper order of living.

Times have changed. Attitudes have changed. Values have changed and more than anything we have changed. We are walking through a phase where people are no more interested in the values of life. The word culture, when defined, means a way of life. India could boast all these years of her ancient cultural heritage, which really meant the positive way of life of an extremely brilliant race of people. But no more, today, because we no more have it. India is going through a dark phase culturally. A sad phase not worthy of its great heritage.

The world is progressing and the technological and scientific achievements have positively confuced India culturally.

When a civilisation is progressing there is nothing negative about it. But ironically it is not positive progress that we see today. Ours is a civilisation which is so sophisticated and advanced with 5000 year history. India has produced some of the greatest men in every field. But why sudden degeneration of values all around us?

Analysed from the angle of a classical performing art- dance, it has just become an old tradition without direc-

tion. Let us look at the prevailing situation with a sense of detachment. A dancer, when asked whether she is happy being a dancer, says no. Because she has no platform to perform and she does not get what she deserves. A teacher when asked, says he or she is not happy. Because there is a very synthetic interest among the students and she gets no satisfaction. When organisers are asked whether they would put up classical dance performance, the answer is no. Because they are not able to get a crowd. When sponsors are asked for support, the answer is no. Because in their own language they do not get any mileage.

So, a 2000 year old tradition is not wanted by anyone. If I am a dancer, I am deeply hurt, because after helping a civilisation for so many years, now comes a day when no body wants me.

Who is responsible for this situation? Whose fault is it anyway? Each one of us is responsible. This age old tradition had survived in some form or the other which can be found through literary and historical evidence. But the form in which it exists today is just about a little over 100 years old. As is well known by every one the Devadasi system (temple dancers) was abolished in 1948 to change the art form. Here too we see dance having been abused for no mistake of it. Dance which originated as an entertainment, slowly got transformed as a temple ritual. Bharatha has never mentioned what to do but just how to do.

So we transformed dance into a temple art. We made it dirty and finally we purified it by abolishing the Devadasi tradition and giving it a status.

But did it help? Yes, but only for sometime. The term 'shringara' or the element of love was cautiously wiped out and 'bhakti' or devotion became the ultimate goal of dance. The contradiction is but glaring. Temples which are places of worship where dance existed could not hold the purity which meant that it was we the people who were responsible and not the art or the artistes.

When dance came to the auditoriums and became a prestigious art form to be learnt by the elite we are facing many problems. During evolution different problems are faced at different tomes which have to be dealt differently. So, when the Devadasi system was abolished "erotic love" had to be eliminated and the terms 'spiritual love' and 'Indian sacred dance' had to be used. But in an age where Western culture has, unfortunately, become so popular through media these terms have no significance. Today dance is a product which has to be marketed under the guise of sacredness. In a totally materialistic world spirituality has no place. So why misuse the word tradition and ruin the art form?

Bharatanatyam, a very rich and self-sufficient form, today is in great danger. People who learn, do so for the wrong reasons. People who promote for selfish reasons and of course the people who watch, consider it a punishment. Why is this happening? It is because of the narrow mindedness of the so called purists. Dance in the form which exists today can in no way be called an old traditional style. The purists or the premier institutions which regenerated dance have unfortunately become so close minded and

self appreciative, that they have stopped growing. Anything that does not evolve stagnates. Art is self expression. When an individual stops thinking, art stagnates. Unfortunately artistes either do not think or they are not allowed to think. This is a fast moving world where everything and everyone around us has changed. Dance has become outdated and thus no one wants it. What can we do to repair the situation? Each one of us has to strip the ego and and come out of the cocoon of selfishness and think of dance and not of ourselves.

While learning or performing, let

us think and accentuate the brilliance of the form and give the audience something that will make them think and lead them to a righteous life as Bharatha wanted. Let us make the audience happy, which does not mean that the level of the art has to be reduced, which has become a common line of argument by the purists. But by relating to them in a way that art form will not die. One fears whether there would be any one to patronise or enjoy this traditional form and anything that is not patronised and enjoyed will die a natural death. Where is this tradition heading to? ■

Music Organisations of Bombay

Many of our readers want the addresses of music sabhas. Here are the addresses of prominent music organisations in Bombay.

Fine Arts Society
Plot 16/21, R.C.Marg, Chembur, Bombay 400071

Karnataka SanghaDr M. Visveswaraya Smarak Mandir
Moghul Lane, Near Matunga Road, Station, Mahim (W), Bombay 400016

Mulund Fine Arts
1 Padmavathi, Opp Valjee Road, Mulund (W), Bombay 400080

Nehru Centre
Dr Annie Besant Road, Worli, Bombay 400018

N C P A (Subhash Chandran)
Dorabji Tata Road, Nariman Point, Bombay 400021

Rasika Ranjani Sabha
2/22 Savithri Kunj, Garodia Nagar, Ghatkopar (E), Bombay 400077

Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha
4/2, 11-A, Kirti Kunj, Deodhar Road, Matunga, Bombay 400019

Music Triangle
N.S.Vasan, Om Shanti, 16th Road, Bombay 400054

Bharatiya Music and Arts Society
Bhaudaji Road Extension, Matunga, Bombay 400019

Sree Vallabh Sangeethalaya
Sion (W), Bombay 400016

Bhakta Rasika Ranjani Sabha
17/C Kanchanjunga, Anushakthi Nagar, Bombay 400074

Bandup Fine Arts
B/705 Usha Nagar, Bhandup, Bombay 400078

The Fine Arts Society
R. Chemburkar Marg, Chembur, Bombay 400071

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan
Chowpatty, Bombay 400022

Sangeet Mahabarati
10th Road, Juhu Vile Parle Development Scheme, Bombay 400049

Music Triangle
C-4 Sahakar 5th Road, Santacruz (E), Bombay 400055

Sri Tyagaraja Sabha
Matunga, Bombay 400019

Naadayala
Anish Apartments, I Floor, Amdheri (E) Bombay 400069

Artistes' Foreign Tours

K.S.Gopalakrishnan (flute), M. Chandrasekharan (violin) and Guruvayur Dorai (mridangam) left on September 4 to USA and Canada on a ten day concert tour.

Aruna Sairam (vocal), R. Hemalatha (violin), M.R. Sainath (mridangam) and Sukanya Ramagopal (ghatam) are leaving on September 18, to Switzerland and European countries.

Amrutha Narain (vocal), M.S. Govindaswamy (violin) and M.A. Krishnamurthy (mridangam) on a 12 week tour to USA.

For a close-up
view of
music and dance
scenario
read

PHOENIX

Tuneful Encounters-8

The Genial Vainika

S.N.Sivaswamy

I had met Doreswamy Iyengar much before we came to work together at AIR, Bangalore. He was performing regularly at AIR, Madras, when I was there as a Programme Executive, way back in the forties.

Ours was always a happy get together of two Kannadigas. I had the privilege of hearing in first person Doreswamy Iyengar's great guru, Venkatagiriappa also at the Madras station of AIR.

Every visit of Doreswamy Iyengar to Madras was for me a new experience as he varied his repertoire every time. More than, it was his genial personality, his ready beaming smile and his spirit of cooperation shown during a recording or a live concert endeared him to me and my colleagues.

Later, when he was producer of music at AIR, Bangalore, I had the pleasure of his company everyday, at official meetings, at the coffee house, and across our office tables. We sat together with P.T. Narasimhachar, the great poet, for the production of his delightful operas.

Narasimhachar had a musical form in his mind for every one of his compositions but could not identify the ragas or could hum the tunes out for us. It took Doreswamy Iyengar's genius to fathom the poet's inner most mind and come out with the right tune every time. I consider those meetings with the great artistic talents as among my most memorable musical experiences.

Much later, when I had retired from AIR and Doordarshan, I spent a little time every year at Madras during

the music festivals, when I attended many a concert by eminent musicians, along with my wife and my father in law. One such concert we chose to attend was Doreswamy Iyengar's veena recital. The concert hall was in Oliver Road, and the three of us had seats in the front row. For the main raga of the concert Doreswamy Iyengar had selected Mohana ('Mohana Rama' if I remember). Honestly, till then I had my misgivings about the sustaining quality of Mohana. When

I mentioned this to my father in law, an ardent music lover, he said Mohana was among the most beautiful ragas. And Doreswamy Iyengar proved it that day with a scintillating rendering of the raga.

At the end of the concert, when I went up the dais to congratulate Doreswamy Iyengar on the excellence of his performance, he stunned me with the modesty of his reply, "how can it be otherwise when rasikas like you are sitting in front of me!"

The Glory of Indian Music

The art of music is the heart of Indian culture. Its origin can be traced back to the hoary past. It sprung from the divine feet of Goddess Saraswathi.

Later slowly but steadily it grew into a Ganges of superbly modulated melody. This Ganges spread across the sprawling length and breadth of India collecting into itself several tributaries of music from the great masters of the different states of India.

The golden fingers of our ancient virtuosos had perfected the technicalities and sound sweetness of music. They practised music as a divine tapasya. For them music was a sadhana, a concentrated effort of heart and soul to reach the glorious end a moksha.

In India, music is intended to serve the religious and spiritual needs of human soul. Indian musicians express their religious and spiritual aspirations through this sweet medium of sound.

The large sky of Indian music is studded with the most brilliant stars like Tyagaraja, Tansen etc. Every state has produced its own sublime stars.

On the holy soil of India, Valmiki sang the song of Ramayana, Vyasa tuned the melodies of Mahabharatha, Jayadeva enthralled and captivated India by the sweetest turns of music in his Gita Govinda. Above all Sri Krishna's flute-melodies in Brindavan stirring for ever in the hearts of all people. It is an unforgettable experience to listen to any inspired piece of music of a truly great master.

So every Indian born on this sanctified soil can be happily proud of the great tradition of music that has become a Ganges of melody flowing through the hearts of all who come in touch with India's entrancing songs of pure sweetness.

M.C.Narasaraju
Chirala

City Dancer Featured in Mumbai Fete



Padmaja Suresh



Gopika Verma

Ritu Sringara, a dance feature based on apposite verses in Hindi and tuned to a blend of Carnatic and Hindustani melodies, was the highlight of the three-day Mini Monsoon festival of music and dance of the Fine Arts Society of Chembur, started on July 26.

The feature was choreographed and danced by Padmaja Suresh of Bangalore, daughter of K.K. Rajan, a votary of Chakiyar Koothu. Padmaja is proficient in both Bharathanatyam and Kathak.

On the second day, Gopika Verma, a student of Kalyani Kutti Amma doyen of Mohiniattam, gave an exposition for a selection of Swati Tirunal compositions in that style.

A unique 'jugalbandhi' involving popular Kadri Gopalnath on Saxophone and Ronu Majumdar of Calcutta on the flute provided a fitting finale to the enjoyable fete. A. Kanyakumari on the violin, Guruvayoor Dorai on mridangam and Abhijeet Banerjee on tabla were the accompanying artistes in the event for the first time in Mumbai.

In the Society's talent promotion concert, two young aspirants were featured. While Gouri Krishnamoorthi, a student of Soundarya Natya Kalalaya (Garodia Nagar) impressed with her Bharathanatyam, Vidya Rajeev presented a Carnatic vocal recital. Narayan Parthasarathy (violin), Gouri Shankar (mridangam) and Hari (kanjira) formed the supporting team for her recital.

Rain Drops

A two day festival of classical dance was organised at the Godrej Dance Academy Theatre, Bombay on July 5 and 6, 96.

Indrani Mukherjee (Kathak), Debi Baso (Odissi), Madhuri Patil (Mohiniattam) and Vaibhav Arekar (Bharatanatyam) gave performances.

Meenakshi Seshadri, student of Charumathi Ramachandran gave a Carnatic vocal performance at the Mulund Fine Arts, Bombay on June 3, 96. She was accompanied by Vijayaraghavan (violin) and Pavarangan (mridangam).

A lecture demonstration on the role of the bandish in Khayalgayaki was organised at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay on July 7, 96.

V.R. Athavale, a scholar of music initiated the debate. Traditional bandishes were presented by his disciple, Nisha Nigalye Parasnis.

Advertise in
PHOENIX

More Youngsters to the Fore in Devnandan Fest

The Devnandan Yuva Sangeetotsav, celebrating its decennary this year, has gained an important place in the cultural calendar of the City. With the launching of Smriti-Nandan, a cultural centre by Lalita Ubhaykar, the well-known Hindustani vocalist, the annual fete jointly organised by her and Sursagar has ensured a permanency for the popular festival.

Many young aspirants who have figured in this annual have now grown in stature, winning laurels for themselves and their gurus. Some of them like Shubendra Rao (sitar), Rupak Kulkarni (flute), Rashid Khan (vocal), Sangeeta Shankar (violin), Subhra Guha (vocal), Yogesh Samsi (tabla), Sanjeev Abhayankar (vocal), Sarathy Chatterjee (vocal), Gundecha Brothers (vocal-Dhrupad), and many others are in demand all over the country and abroad. The sponsors of the festival justly feel proud that they had provided the spring board for their blooming into mature artistes.

The current festival which started on August 17, featured seven artistes, including a husband and wife team and the Gundecha brothers. One dare say all of them showed promise, while the Dhrupad duo for whom this is a repeat appearance after their debut in 1992, it was a tryst with a familial ambience.

The other duo was Sriram Parasuram and Anuradha Sriram, Madras. Sriram is an accomplished violinist in the Carnatic style. C.R. Vyas is his Guru in the Hindustani style which has already won for him several awards, including the Surmani and the Amir Khan memorial. Presently he is the Executive Director of Sampradaya, a Ford Foundation

funded research institute in Madras.

His wife Anuradha is no less distinguished. Well versed in all the three styles of music as Sriram, she is a well-known play-back singer for Tamil and Hindi movies, winning the Dr J. Jayalalitha Cine Award for the best female play-back singer in Tamil for 1995. She also has the awesome distinction of winning a platinum disc for record sales of her song in the Hindi film Ram Jane.

In their morning concert the two some aired a rare raga Sagara, believed to have been created by the guru of Sriram's guru C.R. Vyas. It was pleasant listening, though the more familiar Miya-ki-Malhar was not as evocative. But their style, the vibrant sonority of Sriram romantically balanced in Anuradha's flashy tonality was enjoyable.

The two-day fare got to a bright start with the vocal refrain of Kirtikumar Badseshi, a senior student of Vinayak Torvi. He presented khayals in Bhoop and Bhinnashadj. His mellow voice makes for a lyrical appeal. As impressive was the flute recital of Rupak Kulkarni, a student of veteran Hariprasad Chaurasiya. His Bageshri was elaborate with spacious taans, though short in resonance. The other artiste was also an instrumentalist. Pradeek Chaudhury the sitarist is the son of the seasoned Debu Chaudhury. The youngster is an M.A (Music) of the Delhi University. His Gurjari Thodi revealed a proportioned representation of the morning melody.

The artistes were supported by as competent a team of ebullient youths comprising Udayaraj Karpur and Anis Pradhan on table and the dependable Vyasamurthy Katti on the harmonium.

Agenda for September

Maharashtra Apex Festival by Nadanta Academy of Dance and Music

Nadanta Academy of Dance and Music, Bangalore is organising the Maharashtra Apex-Parampara festival from September 27 to 29, 96.

Venue: Bangalore Gayana Samaja
September 27.

6-15 pm: Saxophone recital by Kadri Gopalnath, Kanyakumari (violin), Bangalore Pravin (mridangam), Srishaila (ghata) and B. Rajashekar (morching).

7-50 pm: Sugama Sangitha by Puttur Narasimha Nayak and Snehaja Praveen.

September 28.

Venue: Ravindra Kalakshetra

6-00 pm: Vocal concert by Sri Vidyabhushana Thirtha Swamiji, B.U. Ganesh Prasad (violin), Anantha Subramanyam (mridangam) and M.A. Krishnamurthy (ghatam).

7-35 pm: Hindusthani vocal by Parameshwar Hegde, Vyasamurthy Katti (Harmonium) and Ravindra Yavgal (Tabla).

September 29.

Venue: Ravindrakalakshetra

6-00 pm: Vocal recital by T.V. Ramaprasad, V.N. Ravi (violin), Umayalapuram Sivaraman (mridangam) and T.V. Vasan (ghatam).

7-45 pm: Dance- Bhavya Rama Katha by Kiran Subramanyam and Sandhya Kiran, a dance festure on Lord Rama.

Festival sponsored by:
Maharashtra Apex Corporation Ltd,
Manipal

From Here and There

Laya Nada Sangam

Sri Vani School of Music and the Nandi Talavadya Academy had an interesting, composite programme to celebrate their anniversary on August 12 at Yavanika. After an impressive veena recital by master T. Pramodkumar, Laya Vidwan M. Vasudeva Rao released a cassette entitled Laya Nada Sangam, directed by S.V. Giridhar. Later, A.V. Prakash of Mysore on the flute assisted by M.S. Govindaswamy on the violin and Anoor Ananthakrishna Sharma on the mridangam gave the lead for an absorbing percussion interlude.

Bangalore K. Venkatram who was the chief guest on the occasion, honoured artistes, M.S. Srinivasamurthy (flute), B.R. Seshadri (mridanga), Padmini Rao (Bharathanatyam) and R.S. Anantharamaiah (percussion).

Homage to Chittibabu

On August 18, the local Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and the Chittibabu Memorial Committee, joined together to pay homage to the veena maestro who passed away recently. A veena quartet by four youngsters led the Shradhanjali to the popular Guru who had among his many students the local favourites Suma Sudheendra and Shanti Rao. It was followed by brief recitals on the veena by R.K. Suryanarayana, Rajalakshmi Tirunayan, Shanti Rao and Suma Sudheendra. V.S. Rajagopal on mridangam and B.K. Chandramouli on Kanjira accompanied them.

A dance feature based on the veteran's compositions by the students of Padmini Ramachandran and a video-visual cassette clipping of the master formed part of the programme.

Rich tributes were paid by B.V.K. Sastry, S.N. Chandrasekhar, S. Ramachandran and Bhaskar.

Maithri

Maithri, the cultural wing of the State Bank of India on August 17 had got up a pleasant function for the release of a cassette of Hindustani vocal

by one of its proud employee K.V. Nandakumar. The cassette was released by Y.K. Muddukrishna, director Kannada and Culture, Government of Karnataka, SBI General Manager V.R. Gundannavar presided over the function.

The pleasant function concluded after the vocal recital by Nandakumar who was accompanied on the tabla by M. Nagesh and on the harmonium by Umakant Puranik.

New Sabha Remembers B.N. Suresh



T.V. Gopalakrishnan inaugurating the festival

Over 300 students of schools and colleges in various parts of the City took part in a youth music festival and competition to pay homage to flutist B.N. Suresh at the Odakattur Math recently.

The three-day fiesta from July 26 was organised by the Indian Institute of Music and Arts (IIMA) of Kalyana Nagar, thus launching another Sabha in the City. Prizes were given away in as many as 26 categories, including dance and music.

Mridangam maestro T.V. Gopalakrishnan who presided over the valedictory function and also headed the panel of judges, exhorted young musicians to adopt a professional ap-

proach so as to face any situation in a concert or a competition.

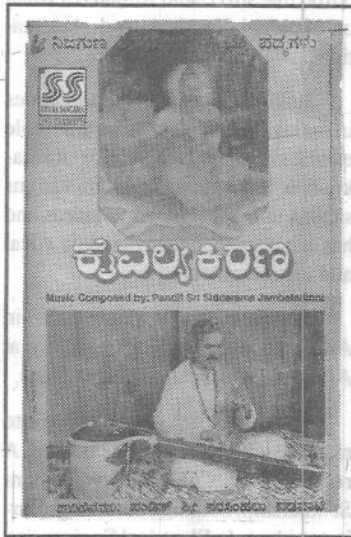
In her welcome address, IIMA Managing Trustee, Lochana Ashok Kumar disclosed that the Institute besides the annual competition, would organise workshops in the different aspects of music in different parts of the City.

Brief recital by outstanding prize-winners was an added attraction at the function.

Subscribe to
PHOENIX



Kaivalya Kirana



Kaivalya Kirana by Pandit Narasimhalu Vadavati (Swara Sangama, Raichur SS 001 Stereo Rs 35-00)

SWARA SANGAMA of Raichur under the banner of SS Stereo (SS-001) could not have thought of a more enduring collection to launch its cassette series than the priceless lyrics of Nijaguna Shivayogi, the well-known mystic. The seven lyrics under the title "Kaivalya Kirana" were set to music by the late Siddarama Jambaldanni, one of the most popular singers of the lighter variety like Vachanas, Tattva Padas, etc. He had popularised many of them during his life time.

The artiste who has rendered the seven lyrics is the well-known clarinet-player Narasimhulu

Vadavati. A disciple of Pandit Jambaldanni, one dare say he has imbibed the sensitive style of his mentor convincingly. As one mulls over the pieces in Bhimpalas, Maru-Behag, Chayanat and so on, it is revealing that Narasimhulu should be as impactful in his vocalisation as in his blowing technique. He has a pleasing voice and he uses it tunefully.

It augurs well for the cassette series and to Narasimhulu himself that the venture was blessed by the senior-most guru of the tradition, Pandit Puttaraj Gawai who released it in Raichur on the occasion of the 57th death anniversary observance of Panchakshari Gawai.

Stotra Sudha Lahari



Stotra Sudha Lahari by M.A. Meera and M.A. Mythili. Devotional Stotras in Sanskrit on Venkateswara and Krishna (Bhakti Dhvani, Bangalore Stereo Rs 33-00).

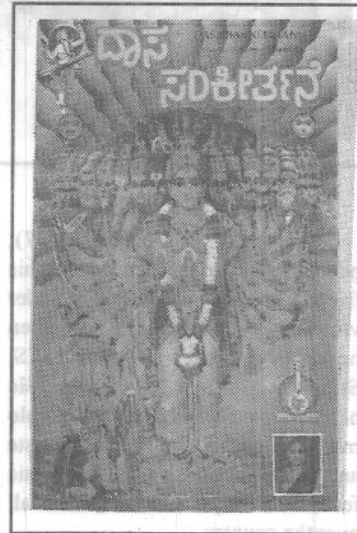
JAGGU Singriengar's Venkatesha Padavalamba Stotra is as sacred to Srivaishnavites as the ageless Sri Krishnakarnamrita of Leela Suka. The devout recite them in their daily prayers.

The two masterpieces have been

set to music by Tirumale Srinivas. Meera and Maithili, the talented daughters of Vidwan M.A. Narasimhachar have rendered them as articulately and in a style which is striking for its lyrical overtones.

The cassette of this rendition has been made by Bhakti Dhvani (Ganakala Mandira, 162/107, III Cross/V main, Thyagarajanagar, Bangalore - 560028). It makes for good listening.

Dasa Sankeertane



Dasa Sankeertane by N. Sreemathi Jayaram. (Sree Productions, Bangalore Stereo Rs 30-00).

The devoted fervour in the mellow voice of Sreemathi Jayaram brings alive some of the most popular compositions of the celebrated saint singers of Karnataka in a cassette released by Sree Productions (220/25, III Main, Vyalikaval, Bangalore 560003). The tunes set to these ditties of famous Kannada literati have a lingering impact, exemplifying their expressive lyricism. One of them dueted by Sreemathi with H.K.Narayana (Kamala Komala) stands out for its sonorous quietude.

Know your Artistes

H.S.Venugopal



Flautist H.S. Venugopal(37), popularly known as Venu amongst his friends, had his initial training under vidwan A.V. Prakash of Mysore when he was 14 and later from vidwan M.S. Srinivasa Murthy of Bangalore. He has been performing both as a solo musician and accompanying artiste and has participated in many music festivals at major cultural centres all over the country.

Born in Mayasandra in Tumkur district to H. Srinivasa Murthy, who was a school teacher and H.S. Jayalakshmi, had his schooling at Mayasandra and joined his grand mother, Rukminiamma, a singer at Mysore and pursued his education there. After graduating from the Mysore University in 1978 he joined Indian Bank in 1979. He is now a cashier at the K.G. Road branch.

Venu is a popular artiste among dance troupes. He has performed at the Ugadi music festival at Mysore in 1991 and has participated in programmes organised by the Department of Kannada and Culture, Government of Karnataka and Indian Council for Cultural Relations for National Integration, Doordarshan and AIR. He has

taken part in the unity concerts for National Integration organised by the Madras Telugu Academy at New Delhi.

He was one of the members of the troupe in Dr Francis Barboza Ensemble which extensively toured Germany and other European countries and took part in the Musica Sacra International, a musical meeting of major world religions at Marktoberdorf, Germany and in the festival, Rituelen Festival in Tongeren Belgium.

Venugopal, apart from playing for dance performances has also composed music for many dance ballet and devotional songs. The devotional songs cassette, Chandana, released by the G.M.L. Academy of Bangalore was composed by him.

H.S.Venugopal, 61, II cross, III East Main, ITI Layout, Behind Vidyapeeta, Bangalore 560085.

H.S.Sudhindra



H.S.Sudhindra (28), is a popular young mridangam artiste of Bangalore who had his training from vidwan N. Vasudeva Rao Mohite and later from vidwan Srimushnam Rajarao of Madras.

He secured first rank in vidwath grade examination and won a prize in the talavadya competition conducted by the Karnataka Sangitha Nrithya Academy in 1994.

He participated in the classical music orchestra in 1989 directed by Sarod maestro Ustad Amjad Ali Khan on National Youth Award presentation.

Sudhindra regularly participates in the layalahari, percussion ensemble established by late Anoor Ramakrishna. He has performed in various sahbas in Bangalore and Madras and has accompanied many leading vocal and instrumental artistes.

Sudhindra is a 'B' grade artiste in AIR and is performing regularly at AIR and Doordarshan programmes.

He has lent percussion support to many artistes in recording cassettes. A recipient of Central Government Scholarship, Sudhindra is an engineering graduate in Electrical Engineering from Bangalore University.

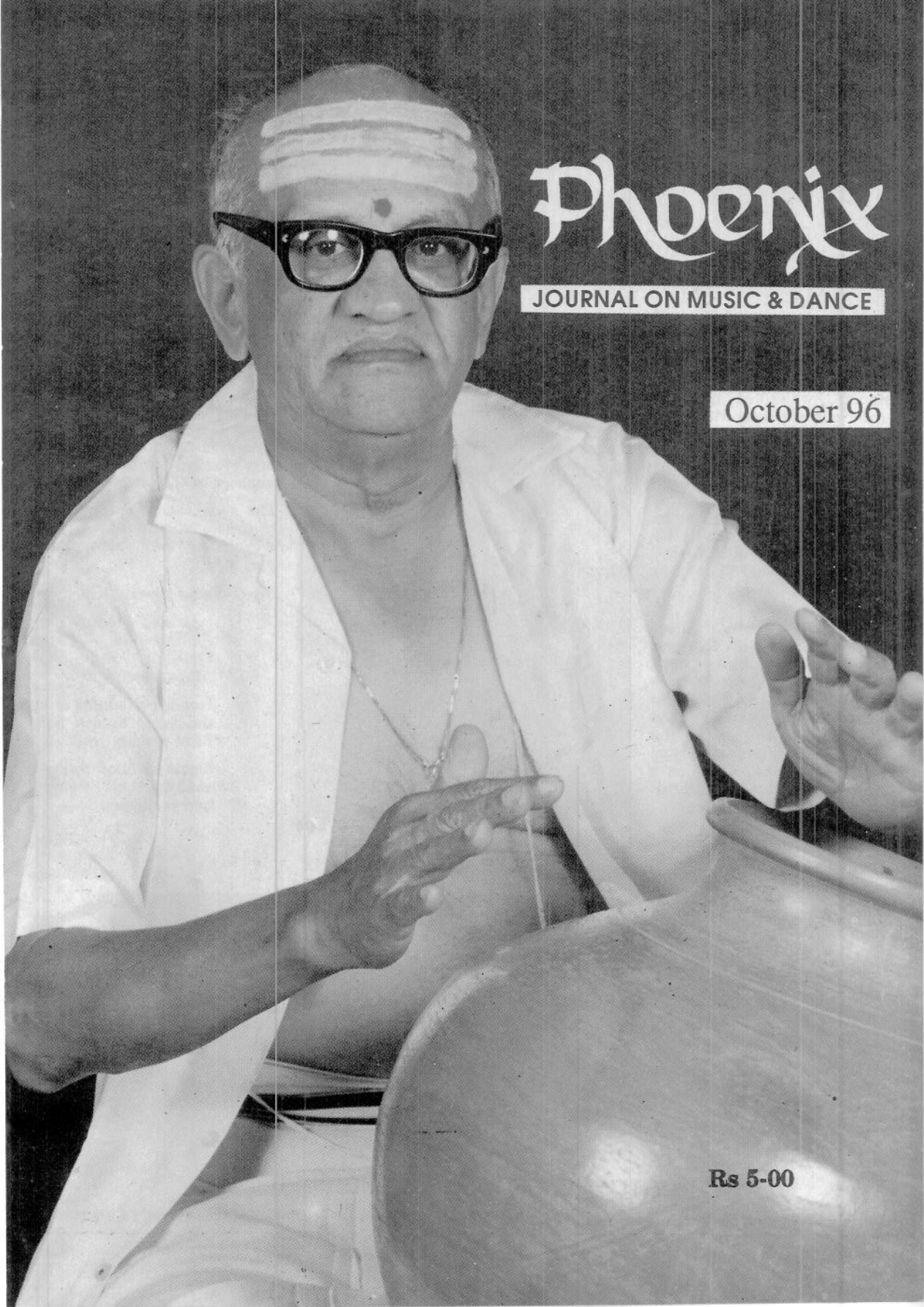
H.S.Sudhindra, 12, 28th cross, Geetha Colony, 4th Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore 560011 ☎ 6633623.

A.P.Rao

Dear Reader

Your comments and views are most valuable to us and the others too. We shall gladly publish the best. But, for maximum impact and better coverage, make them brief. Send your comments to:

The Editor, PHOENIX
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009



Phoenix

JOURNAL ON MUSIC & DANCE

October 96

Rs 5-00

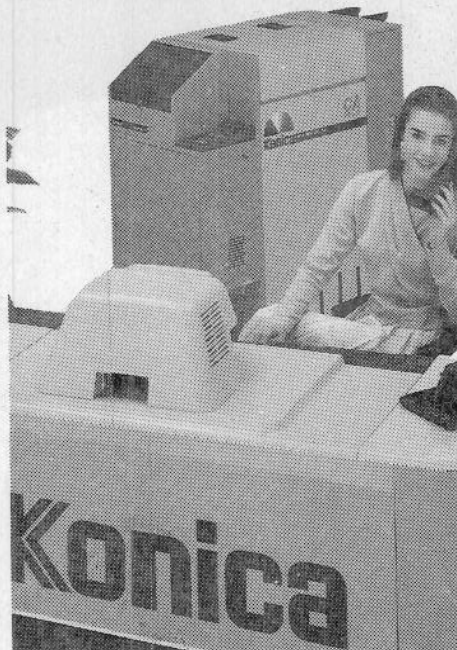
INTRODUCING A NEW DIMENSION TO IMAGING TECHNOLOGY

..... A Professional Course in Photography,
Photo Finishing and Photo Lab Management

The continuously growing demand for skilled mini-lab technicians and Lab Managers will soon be fulfilled.

The Institute of Imaging Technology introduces a short term professional course to impart intensive training in the various aspects of Photography, Photo finishing and Photo Lab Management.

The brainchild of Nippon Group, who have rich experience in marketing Konica products in India and successfully operating a chain of Konica Color Labs in the South, the Institute of Imaging Technology is promoted as a premier centre for professional education of this sort.



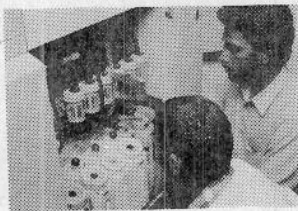
Housed in a spacious, air-conditioned facility, and equipped with a Studio and Library, this is the first of its kind in India, providing a great opportunity to learn the nuances of the art.

The 3 - week course is designed to create scientifically trained technicians and management personnel.

The syllabus covers

- Intensive theory on Photography, Photo Finishing and Lab Management
- Hands-on training using the latest Konica Nice Print system - and
- Demonstration through sophisticated training and evaluation aids

**Enrol today, Rise to become
an entrepreneur on your own merit!**



For more details, contact



INSTITUTE OF IMAGING TECHNOLOGY

8 A, Bragathambal Street, Nungambakkam, Madras-600 034 Telephone : 8233656 Fax : 044-499 1071 / 499 2351.



PHOENIX

Journal on Music and Dance

Vol 1

October 1996

No 12

S.N.Chandrasekhar
67 Basappa Layout
Bangalore 560019 © 6675758
Editor

Bangalore K Venkatram
183, 8th Cross, II Bl, Jayanagar
Bangalore 560011 © 6630079
Associate Editor

N.Sundarraaj
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009 © 2263696
Managing Editor

B. Rajashekar
© 2216459
Advertising Manager

Representatives

Ganapathi Bhat

Hubli -Dharwar

K. Ramamurthy Rao

Mysore

Geeta Raja

9 Chhaya, Jam-e-Jamshed Road

Matunga, Bombay 400019

© 412 2074

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00

Three Years: Rs 140-00

*Please send all remittances to
PHOENIX*

The Circulation Manager

138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar

Bangalore 560009 © 2263696

(Cheques to be drawn on

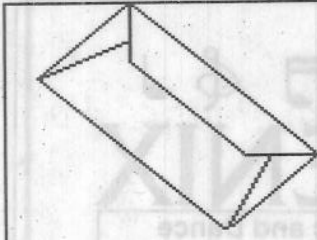
'PHOENIX')

RN 45468/87

Contents

- 4 Readers' Write
- 5 Editorial-Culture, Politics, Food
- 7 Ghatam Maestro with a Difference
- 8 Down Memory Lane
- 12 Krishnotsava
- 14 Calling AIR
- 17 Costal Colossus
- 19 Instant Culture
- 20 Cassette Causerie

Cover Photo
BANGALORE K VENKATRAM
by N.Sundarraaj



READERS Write

Fine Write-up

Appropos articles, 'Inheritor of a Glorious Tradition', article on the achievements and life of Veena Doreswami Iyengar, 'Mysore Bani in Veena', article by V. Doreswami Iyengar and 'Master of the Strings' article by S. Ramachandran.

All these are finely brought out. I have come to understand from Veena Doreswami Iyengar himself, that Veena Subanna had practised vocal classical music with Mysore Sada Siva Rao. This is really an added embellishment to Vainika Subbanna. That is why Subbanna has become the Guru for vocal music to Asthana Vidwan Belakavadi Srinivasa Iyengar whose book "Gaanamrutha" is an asset to learners on Carnatic classical music.

S. Ramachandran directly questions, "But do we have many creative artistes in the true sense of the term?". The answer to this question is more pessimistic than optimistic. Doreswamy Iyengar is a true creative artist who has truly elevated classical music from the general gloom that appears to have settled on it. He really presents great compositions in the style they ought to be. The uniqueness of Doreswamy Iyengar is that he has a natural aversion for contact mike. His art of tana playing has attracted such glorious persons as Palghat Mani Iyer. This, in itself, is a great tribute to his uniqueness.

H.N.Rajanna, Bhadravathi

In Defence of Prathishtana

When the editor is speaking of

Karnataka Nrithya Prathishtana being superfluous, in the same breath he speaks of a glorious tradition - Mysore bani in veena be true of dance? When pandanallur, vazhvoor and Kanchi styles can prevail why not Mysore style? As far as my knowledge goes these traditions of music and dance came down from the time of Vijayanagara period and spread with some variation, all over South India. If Karnataka has taken a lot from the Tanjore quartet, they might have earlier imbibed a lot from the existent art of Vijayanagar empire, of which we can be proud of!

None of us has any prejudice against languages or people. If one or two Kannada songs are danced, that does not mean Tamil Nadu people are ready for integration and will learn the best of Abhinaya from us.

There is nothing wrong in being proud of our language and art and hoping to preserve it for posterity. As artistes we have thoroughly enjoyed what we have learnt and definitely want to preserve it for our future generations and that is the aim of 'Nrithya Karnataka'.

*Lalita Srinivasan,
Director NUPURA, Bangalore*

Self Audition

I read with interest your editorial 'Self Audition' (June 96). This is what some of us were hesitating to write. It deserves and demands an urgent action by the authorities, how so ever delicate the position may be. In fact what is true of AIR is true of DD also.

Probably AIR/DD broadcast classical music programmes late in the night deliberately to avoid criticism as very few will listen to them.

More such subjects must be repeated often so that the slumbering bosses and bigwigs wake up and act.

K.N. Anantharam, Bangalore

Review Doordarshan

I eagerly await PHOENIX just to see the 'Calling AIR'. This is the only magazine in the country which evaluates the AIR programmes.

I suggest you to take up reviewing the Doordarshan programmes also.

Rajeshwari, Bangalore

Vasudeva Keerthana Manjari

Mr Justice A.J. Sadashiva, of the Karnataka High Court released the cassette and book 'Vasudeva Keerthana Manjari' at the packed auditorium of Sri Ramamandira Association, Bangalore on September 29, 96.

Speaking on the occasion secretary of the kendra and S. Krishnamurthy, for their services in the cause of 'music'.

S.B. Ramachandra Rao, former general manager, Bharat Electronics Ltd., Bangalore, who presided complimented the Kendra on its achievement.

This was followed by a vocal concert by S. Shankar, accompanied by B. Raghuram (violin) and Vasudev (Mridangam).

The cassettes and books were sold at the venue at a concessional price.

Editorial

Culture, Politics, Food

The Karnataka Government is going a whole hog in promoting art and culture in the State. Whether in the munificence to the more than a dozen academies, institution of annual awards to worthies or conducting festivals of art, the concerned departments like the Directorate of Kannada and Culture, Tourism, Youth Services and the department of Information and Publicity vie with one another to steal a march. Artists, both plastic and performing, also take it as a privilege to take part in all these activities, activities that call for approbation.

But neither these departments nor the powers that be seem to realise that it could be disastrous to mix culture with politics or food. In such an eventuality, culture perforce takes a back seat, nay gets dismally humiliated. Yet it is surprising that this home truth should have escaped their attention. Perhaps the euphoria of it all is so overwhelming that it makes them turn a blind eye to the reality.

But for the artists who would naturally feel elated at the prospect of taking part in a State function, it is insulting when considerations other than aesthetic take precedence in the order of things. Such philistine attitude is indeed a mockery !

That is what happened in the famous Rajgir festival in Bihar sometime ago when a reputed dancer cut short her recital and another equally celebrated dancing couple withdrew from it. The experience back home is not more elevating. Instances are galore. In one such, a NRI dancer from America was slated to perform in a glamorous function where more than half a dozen noted artists were being felicitated with State awards. As usual, the Chief Minister who was to give away the awards did not turn up. But his effusive note eulogising the services of each, together with the preambles from the reader, consumed a major part of the evening. The formalities with the concerned minister who gave away the awards giving her own sermon befitting the occasion and the finishing touches stretched beyond the reasonable 8:30 p.m. And by the time the stage was got ready for the dancer, there were hardly a dozen left in the hall. It was a chilling experience for the hapless dancer who limply ran through the card.



Editorial

Another well-known dancer who was faced with a similar situation was more articulate in her reaction. She was billed for the Independence Day entertainment. The start was inordinately delayed, the Governor and the Chief Minister who were to be the chief guests, forgiving themselves at the last minute. Much time was lost before the dancer got her turn to go on stage, more than an hour behind schedule. And just when she was getting into her own with a Tarangam, the Minister for Culture took her leave, followed by her retinue and a whole contingent of officers of the department. The dancer was left with no option than to withdraw, but not before she gave vent to her chagrin to the officer in charge.

The worst was yet to be and that came in the prestigious Karnataka Utsav in New Delhi recently. It was a big event for the State, a proud son of which is the Prime Minister. He was there with all his ardent admirers on time to inaugurate the three-day fiesta that got on way with a gala folk form. But by the time a senior Bharathanatyam dancer went on stage all the fervour among the dignitaries was on the wane, especially with the richly flavoured eatables on the other side filling their nostrils. Even the Chief Minister seemed preoccupied in discussions with his minions.

Distraught, the usually suave dancer lost her temper. At once she called it a day, but not before going to the mike and chastising the unbecoming audience for showing disrespect to a classical art which had added lustre to Indian culture. She also pleaded with the powers that be to keep culture away from politics and food if they were really proud of their heritage and wanted to promote it.

Sane words from one who has dedicated her life for the art. Comments thereto are superfluous !

S.N. Chandrasekar

This issue is sponsored by

Smt and Sri V.Krishnan

Sri V.Krishnan is the Founder President of Parthasarathy Sangeetha Sabha and the General Manager (Commercial), Indian Telephone Industries, Bangalore.

Sri Krishnan is a well-known philanthropist who is helping many cultural organisations.

He is the patron of Percussion Arts Centre, Bangalore.

Cover Story

Bangalore K Venkatram Ghatam Maestro with a Difference

The announcement of the Bangalore Gayana Samaja that Bangalore K. Venkatram has been selected to preside over its annual music conference this year did not come as a surprise to artistic circles in the State. The surprise was that the signal honour should have eluded this ardent, indefatigable and trenchant lover of the art so long!

Venkatram's claim for the distinction is not just as a ghatam vidwan, though his contribution

in that disposition is not insignificant. He has provided ghatam accompaniment to more than three generations of vocalists and instrumentalists in the company of stalwarts like Palghat Mani Iyer, Palani Subbudu, Muruga Bhupathy, etc. Yet he is not the senior-most in the genre, seniority both in respect of age and claim.

His claim is buttressed by his unrivalled, long-standing service in the cause of music and musicians. It is in that capacity that he has won the admiration and gratitude of artiste community. Honours such

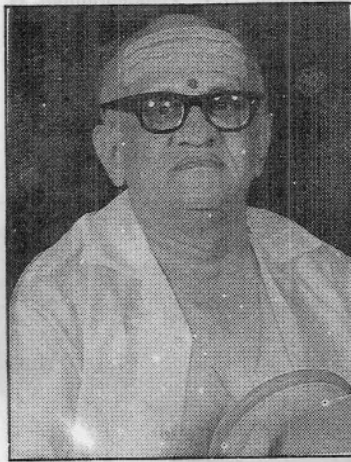
as these are only recognition of that service, something which should encourage such individuals to go on.

Venkataram is one such individual whose life and work have enriched the ambience in which he has lived and worked. Whether as a responsible officer in a PSU or as an artiste, he has left the impress of his acumen in no uncertain terms.

If the one helped him in meeting the creature comforts, the other served as a succor to nurture his artistic sensibilities. In either case, he has

acquitted himself creditably as events have proved.

He has gracefully retired from his job, his brain-child, the Karnataka Ganakala Parishath has established itself as a frontline organisation of musicians and the Percussive Arts Centre, his youngest offspring is making strides as a unifying force for artistes engaged in that pursuit.



Amidst all this, he has not neglected his duty to his family, the ideal two-plus-two having no grouse as far as fulfilling individual aspirations.

Venkatram's first love, however, has remained music with particular reference to percussion. Especially after his superannuation he has been giving his full-time for the Centre, especially with the Ganakala Parishath getting its roots firm and unassailable. Like the latter, the Centre is also growing in size and usefulness, extending the sphere of its activities beyond the confines of the State. The five-day conference in connection with the centenary celebrations of Mayuram

Viswanatha Sastry, a noted contemporary composer, held with eclat in Madras not long ago, bears eloquent testimony to the Centre's expanding influence.

With his inherent interest in percussive art, Venkataram in association with the Ayyanar College of Music has developed a Percussive Ensemble, comprising almost all instruments in vogue. The experiment has thrown open opportunities to youngsters in the line to fully explore the possibilities in rhythm-oriented exercises.

Venkatram's interest in vocal music is as abiding. The famed flutist B.N. Suresh was one such artiste to have benefited by his knowledge of vocal music. With the cooperation of his wife, G.R. Jaya, who is herself a vocalist of reckoning, he continues to impart training to many vocalists like Padma Gurudatt, who has specialised in singing the intricate 'Avadhana Pallavi'. His daughter V. Kalavathi has already made a name as a competent vocalist of both the classical and light variety.

His son V. Krishna, on the other hand has taken after the father-opting for the percussion. His indeed is a small family of musicians where one member complements the faculties of the other to share the joys of creative endeavour.

For the small family of PHOENIX of which Venkataram has been a friend and philosopher, it is a happy occasion to rejoice. They join his numerous fans to congratulate Venkataram and complement the Samaja on its worthy choice.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

Bangalore K.Venkataram

My reminiscences in the field of music cover over five decades spanning association of four generations of musicians. I owe my early entry into music to my father, post master S. Krishnaswamy Iyer who virtually forced me into it.

Those were the days when weekly meets of musicians were common features at Chamarajpet commencing from around 10 p.m at the instance of the versatile vocal-violin vidwan L.S. Narayanaswamy Bhagavathar and his brother advocate-musician L.S. Seshagiri Rao.

My father, who was a keen admirer (himself would sing while shaving and while teaching my elder sister Paruvatham - later Parvathy Krishna-swamy), had an obsession for Bhagavathar and Rao. I was put under ghatam vidwan. K.S. Manjunathan, who was a protege of this family. My association with him lasted till his demise in 1989.

My association with Manjunathan and later with the great violin maestro T. Chowdiah was a period which brought enlightenment to me in a big way. Chowdiah used to stay at the Malabar Lodge at Chamarajpet, and sometimes at the residence of A.Venkobachar (mrudanga vidwan A.V.Anand's father). This opened lot of opportuni-

ties for intimate association with him. When Manjunathan became very busy travelling and performing with him. A.V. Anand and myself were given mrudangam practice with several artistes who used to visit Manjunath. I remember artistes like Sunderraja Iyengar, Hebbani Venkataramana Sastry, T. Srinivasacharya, N.L. Cheluvraj, H.V. Venkataramiah, *et al* who used to sing for us.

Anand who was senior to me used to provide mrudangam for several solo recitals of Chowdiah with Manjunathan on ghatam. Whenever

ghatam is still green in my memory. Other concerts of solo recitals which I played had M.L.Veerabhadriah, T.M. Puttaswamiah, M.S. Ramiah, A.V. Anand on mrudangam. Greats like Ariyakkudi, Musiri, Alathur, Madurai Mani, G.N.B. were the artistes with whom I had opportunities to play because of Chowdiah. I was fortunate enough to play with great mrudangam trio, Palghat Mani Iyer, Palani Subramanya Pillai and C.S. Murugabhupathy.

Before recollecting my association with some of these greats, I would recall the days when I was exposed to giants of that generation through their concerts mainly at the Bangalore Gayana Samaja. As I recall these from memory, thoughts could be disjointed.

Around 1946, when I used to pass through the Shankariah Hall on my way to the Bangalore High School, the English and Kannada placards would attract my attention to the

details of the musicians scheduled for concerts in the Gayana Samaja. That decade and the next were formulative years of my career in music and I managed to attend all major concerts of the time.

The admission to the concerts was restricted only to members and to



Bangalore K. Venkataram and Jaya Venkatram

Manjunathan was preoccupied, I was asked to provide ghatam. Thus, I had several unique occasions to accompany Chowdiah in concerts. Mysore Vasudevacharya's concert with Chowdiah, Ayyamani Iyer (mridangam), Arunachalappa (harmonium) for which I played

those who had tickets. A thatched barricade around the hall would prevent listening of the concerts from outside. There were no amplifiers except for some veena recitals. The original voice levels, instrumental tones and timbres could be heard in their natural sound levels without any distortions of any sort.

The major concerts would be with one of the three greats, Palghat Mani Iyer, Palani Subramanya Pillai or Murugabhupathy. I would somehow go to places where these artistes were lodged (mostly the Modern Hindu Hotel at Ananda Rao circle) and seek their patronage to take me as their disciple and take me to the concerts with them. They would oblige and I used to attend all concerts played by them. V.T. Srinivasan, the secretary of the Samaja was a scrupulous person and would not tolerate anyone attending without a valid ticket. He would buy tickets even for his family members despite hosting the artistes in his home. Krishnappa, his assistant was equally efficient and strictly check every member.

These two identified my attending all the major concerts and decided to catch me. It was a concert of Maharajapuram Vishwanatha Iyer with Papa and Murugabhupathy. I had met Murugabhupathy in a hotel on the SJP Road and arranged for myself to go with him. Immediately as we landed Krishnappa accosted me and was promptly told by Murugabhupathy that he had brought me with him! V.T. Srinivasan and Krishnappa decided to keep a vigil over me.

Once I went to a concert buying a ticket for Rs 6/- for the first time. It

was GNB's concert with Palghat Mani who was felicitated on receipt of the Academi Award (then called President's Award). It was a packed hall. GNB had brought a sruthi box and needed assistance to play it. Mani Iyer asked me to go up to the dais and play the sruthi box, which I obeyed

complimentary pass. From then on he would be enquiring about my progress regularly. I admired him so much that I adopted his sense of punctuality and administrative qualities.

When he was Financial Manager in Indian Telephone Industries, we had frequent discussions on music and musicians and it was in Gayana Samaja that I first played and have been playing with several artistes.

In 1956 when Palghat Mani Iyer and Alathoor Subbiyer were the secretaries of the Thyagabrahma Sabha in Tiruvaiyaru, Mani Iyer encouraged me by scheduling me with Madurai Srirangam Iyengar, Madras Balakrishna Iyer (violin) and Kumbakonam Rangu Iyengar (Mrudangam) in a top slot. When I was about to climb the dais, Subbaiyer asked me as to who told me to join this group. When told of Mani Iyer's instructions he could not help allowing me. Later, after that slot, Subbaiyer himself scheduled me for several senior slots. It was at that time that I met Umayalpuram Sivaraman who played with several seniors. I also

met his father, Kasinathan at Kumbakonam.

In 1953, Chamarajapet Sree Rama Seva Mandali organised a Nagaswaram recital of Tiruvaduthurai T.N. Rajarathnam Pillai. S.V. Narayanaswamy Rao, the Secretary of the mandali asked me to play ghatam for the concert. Guruvayur Dorai was the mrudangam artiste. This was relayed from the Mysore Station of All India Radio from 7.45 to 9 p.m. My name was announced as Bangalore



Bangalore Venkatram, Jaya Venkatram with V. Krishna and V. Kalavathi

instantaneously. On seeing me on the platform Srinivasan sent word with Krishnappa to know how I got entry and I promptly produced the counterfoil. After the concert I was asked to stay back. Srinivasan returned my ticket amount and also gave me a cover containing Rs 10/- for playing the sruthi. He questioned me on my regular attendance and wanted to know how I managed to be a disciple of all the three at the same time. When I explained my predicament, he immediately issued a

K.Venkataram. There was another Kadathur Venkataraman playing ghatam then and to identify me, 'Bangalore' was added and it has come to stay.

When the thamboora was being tuned, Rajarathnam Pillai noticed that the sruthi of my ghatam was slightly higher and he told me not to worry about it, as he was used to be accompanied by Thavil which is not tuned. On the platform, when he noticed that the sruthi of my ghatam was in tune with the thamboora, he checked up his sruthi box to satisfy himself that the thamboora had not been meddled with. He questioned if I had got another ghatam replaced. I replied that I had tuned the ghatam. He took the microphone and exclaimed "what times have come; people have started tuning ghatams!" Later, he appreciated my effort so much publicly that it boosted my career status.

Around 1957-58, when flute B.N. Suresh was being guided by me for concert planning and techniques, I took Suresh to Adyar where our grand old man, Mysore Vasudevacharya had his abode. We were in Madras for a concert. Acharya asked Suresh to play. He rendered "Raa Raa Raajeevalochana", a krithi of Vasudevacharya himself. He asked Suresh who had taught the krithi. When told that I had taught him, I was asked how I learnt it. I had the script from "Vani" the Telugu Akashvani journal when Voleti Venkateswarulu was teaching in the "learn to sing" broadcast from Vijayawada and Hyderabad.

The notation for the charana in this script is slightly at variance with the one published in the "Vasudeva Keerthana Manjari". On noticing it, I appealed to Acharya that it be corrected and the original notation restored. Vasudevacharya explained that the revised portion was aesthetically better and need not be changed. He advised us to stick to the "Vani" text. How great the Acharya was to say so.

My association with Suresh was in 1955 when I had the occasion to meet B. Nilakantan, then Plant Engineer in the ITI. He was associated with flute Mali. Later, I joined ITI at the instance of Nilakantan. Soon I became one in his family. B.N. Ramesh, Suresh's younger brother learnt mrudangam under me. From 1956, I had been so closely associated with that family that we were considered inseparables. The tonal quality of Suresh inspired me so much that I took him into my fold and introduced him to all accompanists of the day, violinists B. Vishwantha, A. Veerabhadriah, Anoor Ramakrishna, H.V. Krishnamurthy, R.R. Keshavamurthy, P. Bhuvanesh-wariah, mrudangists C.K. Ayyamani Iyer, M.L. Veerabhadriah, H.P. Ramachar, Munajunathan and others. Later Lalgudi Jayaraman, M.S. Gopalakrishnan, M. Chandrasekharan, V.V. Subramanyam provided violin support with my mrudangam. Palghat Mani Iyer consented and played for Suresh. It is very unfortunate that such a talented flautist should have met an untimely death.

I was residing at Chamarajapet till 1952. When my father expired my family moved to the Visweswarapuram residence of my elder sister, Paruvatham. My neighbour was C.K. Venkataramayya, then kannada translator to the Government. His son C.V. Nagaraj was a disciple of Ganakala Bhushana L. Raja Rao (veena) with whom I performed a series of concerts on mrudangam and either Rathnagiri Subha Shastri or H.R. Ramachandra Rao on violin in Government sponsored concerts named "Sanskriti Prasara" fostered by K. Hanumanthaiya, then Chief Minister, M. Shamanna, elder brother of my brother in law, M. Krishnaswamy was the Finance Secretary and those were days of turbulence over the construction of the Vidhana Soudha. Dr. H. Krishnamurthy, noted Eye Surgeon, living opposite us and his younger son was my disciple in

mrudangam. On the same road was "Raja Sree", pen name of K. Srinivasa Iyengar and Rajalakshmi Srinivasan who used to play veena duets with my accompaniment and I also used to guide them. Raja Sree was a columnist for several magazines and newspapers as a free-lancer. He later became the secretary of the Bangalore Gayana Samaja. Raja Sree's son Rajoo (K.S.S. Rajan, now heading the prestigious organisation "Sampradaya" in Madras) was under my training in mrudangam.

Down the road was an Ganasudhakara A. Subba Rao who used to visit us and we used to visit him often. It was at the residence of Raja Sri that I met the great Dwaram and we would discuss matters of music till late in the nights. I remember Dwaram invited me to join him and his daughter to a movie Madhumathi at Alankar. I was wondering how Dwaram, considered semi blind, could see a film. He had a special frame with suitable lenses for the purpose!

T.V. Gopalkrishnan, who was working in the AG's office in Madras was brought for mrudangam for the Gayana Samaja concert. Later TVG resigned his job and opted for a musical career. Dwaram used to write to me immediately he accepted any concert in Bangalore. He was very intimate and affectionate and I played with him in a number of concerts. I used to visit his residence in Madras at Triplicane and spend time in musical discussions.

An interesting anecdote of his concert at Shankariah Hall for the Gayana Samaja is worth the mention. B. Nilakantan wanted to record the recital of Dwaram and got the permission of V.T. Srinivasan. A Grundig spool recorder was used for taping the concert. It was surprising to Nilakantan when he was asked to pay Rs 12/- (Rs 4/- for two tickets for him and Suresh and Rs 4/- for the space occupied for the recorder which would have accommodated one per-

son)! That was the adherence to rules as per Srinivasan! Dwaram used to make very affectionate enquiries about Chowdiah with me with a request to convey his good wishes to Chowdiah.

The Andhra Government announced a State pension for life on Dwaram. I wrote to him congratulating him. I felt sad when AIR announced the demise of Dwaram. I was amazed to receive a post card thanking me for the letter which was received two days later.

1952 was the year when my upanayanam was performed, which several musicians attended. In the morning, flute Mali came and was having breakfast when Chowdiah entered and went away on seeing Mali in a highly jovial mood (Mali was in his elements). Later, Chowdiah came for lunch, confirming that Mali is not there! It was in that period from 1952 that I had unique occasion to meet great masters of music with Chowdiah.

Arcot Ramaswamy Mudaliar was the Dewan of Mysore State and a reception was held at his residence at the Carlton House in connection with the wedding of one of his relatives. Musri Subramanya Iyer was scheduled to give a vocal recital with Chowdiah, Palghat Mani Iyer and

Manjunathan. Our landing at the Carlton House itself was unique. We were offered a car by the staff of the Dewan which Chowdiah politely refused, telling that he would come in his own car. The car just stopped after crossing the present Maharani's College, about 100 yards from the gate of Carlton House. We had to push it to the gate to the dismay of the Dewan's staff!

In the melodious recital of Musiri, a close relative of Mudaliar requested him to sing Mukhari. He felt embarrassed as Mukhari was considered inauspicious. When Chowdiah and Musiri were engaged in a hush hush discussion, Mudaliar came and enquired what the matter was, Chowdiah explained the request. Pat came the reply. "When Musiri sings nothing can be inauspicious, let him sing," Musiri elaborated the raga and the krithi, "Shiva Kaama Sundari" of Sivan with a detailed neraval. The audience was thrilled and everyone wondered how such a raga could be associated with inauspiciousness!

Musiri's rendering of Thodi and the krithi "Thaye Yashodha" and the elaborate sahitya vinyasa for "Kaalini Chilambu" are fresh in my memory. I requested Musiri to attend a flute recital of B.N. Suresh in Madras in

1957. He wrote appreciating the melodic appeal and advised not to fritter away his energies in "kanakku-vyavahara", but to concentrate on raga bhava. Musiri was well educated and had good administrative capabilities which could be gauged from his services as the secretary of the Thyagabrahma Sangeetha Sabha, Tiruvaiyaru and later at the Government Music College, Madras.

Flute Mali (T.R. Mahalingam) was a genius to be remembered for his elevation of flute to the present day state of art. I did have one occasion to play with Palladam Sanjeeva Rao whose rendition was unique for the paataanthara of those days. More of straight notes and it was Mali who exposed that quarter-tones and micro-tones could be produced on this bamboo instrument. Using the cross-fingering techniques which was his contribution to the flautine art, he could produce subtle gamakas without straying into 'anya swaras'. His use of such graceful notes with 'anuswaras' marked a new trail in this branch of art. But his mono-tonal travels indulging himself in kanakku-vyavahara, many a time would test the patience of even his admirers.

To be concluded

Subscribe to **PHOENIX**

A Magazine on Music & Dance

Annual Subscription Rs 50-00

Three Years Rs 140-00

Subscription to be sent to
The Circulation Manager

PHOENIX

138 5th Cross, Gandhinahar,
Bangalore 560009

Several Aspirants to the Fore in KRISHNOTSAVA



A five day Krishnotsava Music festival was organised by the Youth Forum of the Percussive Arts Centre (PAC) and the Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA) at the latter's auditorium, Bangalore from Septem-

ber 7,96. V.Krishnan, General Manager (Commercial) ITI and founder President of Parthasarathy Swamy Sabha inaugurating the festival appreciated the activities of the forum. Justice Nittoor Sreenivasa Rau

presided.

The inaugural concert was a melodious flute recital by young A.P. Sarvotham, accompanied by Jyothsna Manjunath (violin), T.N. Ramesh (mridangam) and A.S. Kumar (kanjira).

Sarvotham's alapana of Reethigowla and Hemavathi was emotive. 'Namakusuma' in Sree was a welcome addition, rarely heard these days. He could have chosen atleast one major piece on lord Krishna to suit the occasion. Ramesh was good in his mridangam support while Kumar on kanjira appeared promising.

Salem S. Vijayaraghavachariar Memorial concert next day endowed by his son V.Krishnan of Parthasarathy Swamy Sabha was rendered by another young vocalist V. Shankaranarayan of Madras. He was accompanied by Prema (violin), B.R. Srinivas (mridangam) and G. Omkar (morching). 'Nannu Brovu Lalitha' (Lalitha), 'Samajavara' (Hindola), 'Rara Rajeevalochana' (Mohana) were rendered. His detailed alapana of Kambodhi and 'Yadava Nee Baa' revealed his latent

potentialities as a promising vocalist. Srinivas and Omkar provided lively percussion support. Neela Ramgopal was the chief guest.

The Meena Nagarajan Memorial Endowment concert on September 8, endowed by N. Nagarajan and Kumari Lakshmi was an experiential concert. The programme 'Voice and the Veena' was directed by Karaikudi S. Subramanian, Director,

Bhaddhwani, a research and training





centre for music of the world, Madras. Veena by Subramanian was played as an extension and a complement to the voice by Sankari Krishnan, supported by K.S. Sudhaman (mridangam). While veena was known as an accompaniment for vocal music, with the advent of the violin, veena cannot be claimed as ideal in view of the absence of violin's continuity of nada. Sankari Krishnan proved her credentials as a promising vocalist with perfect sense of sruthi and laya. Subramanian is a follower of the Karaikudi tradition and established as a vainika with high

musical attainments. The perfect laya koraippus in their pallavi in Shankarabharana proved their laya sensibilities with a touch of Lalgudi, who has trained Sankari Krishnan. Sudhaman gave lively support on mridangam. 'Janani' in Reethigowla, 'Seshachalanayakam' in Varali were the other items worthy of mention. Veena maestro V. Dore-swamy Iyengar was the chief guest.

Sreekantham Nagendra Sastry in his recital on September 10 exhibited highly promising talent with a power-

ful voice. Veena Kuppa Iyer's krithis 'Pagavari' (Atana) and 'Sadaa Neepadame' (Devamanohari), pieces not heard often, presented neatly. His raga, thana and pallavi in Kambodhi with thrikala and thrishra from 'Arudhi' were neatly executed. Charulatha on violin was melodious and supportive. N.S. Mahesh and S. Prashanth gave neat mridangam and kanjira support. R.K. Padmanabha was the chief guest.

The concluding recital, M. Krishnaswamy Memorial Endowment donated by Parvathy Krishnaswamy was by Sreevardhini accompanied by A.P. Srivatsa (violin), Maheshwara Sastry (mridanga) and Narayana-murthy (ghata). She rendered 'Sri Venugopala (Kuranji) and a new krithi 'Devaki Nandana' (Hemavathi) set to Khanda Tripura, composed by her mother, T.S. Vasanthamadhavi. Sreevardhini's concert reflected an upward trend. But the thamboora drone left much in wanting. A.P. Srivatsa on violin provided a melodious and tuneful support. A. Veerabhadriah was the chief guest.

Altogether the festival provided opportunities to several young aspirants. ♦

Bangalore K Venkatram



Attention Organisers

Music and dance institutions are requested to send their programmes to

The Editor, PHOENIX, 138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009, before the first week of the month.

Calling AIR

Paramapavana Rama, the Purvikalyani masterpiece of Pooch Srinivasa Iyengar was a hot favourite of old-timers, the kriti's structure itself making for an authoritative alapana. But H.T. Ramaswamy's alap for the raga (Aug 2, 8:30 a.m.) fell short in its gestalt. However, in his airing of the kriti proper, Ramaswamy succeeded in highlighting its emotional overtones, some slips in the 'swara' korvais not withstanding.

The veena recital of B.R. Pundalikavalli (9:30 a.m. same day) was less satisfactory on both the counts. Even a weighty piece like Samajavaragamana (Hindola) was not free from slips, slips that persisted in the alap for Simhendramadhyama that followed. One couldn't find fault with the form, but the delineation betrayed a mediocre key. The rendition of the



M.Manjunath

kriti Ninne Nammiti did improve the imagery, but not strong enough to sustain. The only impression that C.K.Tara, an old favourite of many a



R.K.Suryanarayana

musical feature from the Bangalore AIR in the fifties left is that her voice has lost its timbre (Aug 3, 8:30 a.m.). Her best is far behind her, the present form so dismal that her reputation could be at stake!

The National Programme the same day featured a sitar recital by Manilal Nag. From the initial notes of Miya-Malhar it was evident that he was striving for instant likeability. The alap at once acquired a special delight, the flashy Jod-Jhala creating a variety of musical figures. Bageshri was more impactful in its elan, a reposeful 'gat' ambling gracefully and naturally to lure the listener along. It was music that was at once primal and cerebral.

It was a rather familiar piece in Nata that M. Manjunath chose to open his concert at 10:10 a.m. next morning. But what a graceful impact he

made with it. His brief profile of Hindola was as evocative, providing a springboard for the kriti Manasuloni. It was music that evoked surges of optimism in the listener, a blissful feeling which swept the listener as Manju aired Simhendramadhyama for a sonorous Ninne Nammiti. The fingering was so crystallised that the lyrical feel of the words was inescapable.

H.K.Narayana next morning (8:30 a.m.) seemed more composed than usual when he intoned Chakravaka (Namanavi). It was a fine start, the elaborate alap for Vasantha (Deviname) growing into an authoritative representation of the melody. Anuradha Madhusudan on her veena (9:30 a.m. same day) found herself in a similar upbeat mood. Devadideva (Mayamalavagoula) gave Anuradha enough scope to weave instrumental arabesques of rich variety. A good start, but one which did not sustain as



Anuradha Madhusudan



Geetha Ramanand

effectively in Shanmukhapriya. The alap itself was not free from slips, though the kriti Marivere Dikku was reassuring. There is no doubt of her growing confidence.

As a total musical experience, nothing could have been more enduring than the Kalyani (Shivakama Sundari) of R.N. Doreswamy on the veena (Aug 6, 8:30 a.m.). The alap was not overly elaborate, but flowed with resonant exactitude. The imposing Kriti, was embellished with a flurry of niraval and trenchant 'swaraprasthara'. A touch of mastery of the senior Vainika over the mood and mode was unmistakable.

Next day at 9:30 p.m., it was another soulfilling veena recital. The artiste was R.K. Suryanarayana who in the right mood could be elevating. It was a rare "Dasha Ragamalika", with the dignified Shankarabharana as the base. The alap itself was an affirmation of his creative propensity, the 'thanam' flowing with resonant overtones. The Adi tala Pallavi "Sarasadala Nayana Krishna" was as effusive in its elucidation, to leave a pleasing impact. The ragas involved in the package were all familiar melodies, etched with glowing cadences.

G.Varadarangan's vocal recital (Aug 9:25 a.m.) was solid in its exper-

tise. Whether it was the rendition of Sudamayi (Amritavarshini) or the alap for Shree (Sri Varalakshmi), his vocalism was marked for its melodic vision, though his tonal flourishes seemingly drew their inspiration from elsewhere. P.Rama who went on the air at 8:30 a.m. next day revealed a range of voice that flits in 'tara sthayi' with ease. Her alap for Hamsanandi straightaway made a mark with her accomplishments, the trite 'sruti bheda' enriching its sensitivity. Nidumahima, the lovely kriti which has almost disappeared from the concert stage, was intoned in style, some dainty 'swara' passages enlivening the portrayal. The Kanada number was effusive in its structural expanse. Overall, the sonority in Rama's birga-filled voice adds to the lingering effects.

The National Programme on Aug 10 featured an old recording of a vocal recital of T. Brinda, the right way to pay homage to a veteran who had passed away earlier in the month. And as one listened to the choice selection starting with an ode to Thyagaraja (Goula) and the wholesome alap for Bhairavi (Chintayamam), it was easy to recognise the vintage style, a style which is marked for its emotional appeal. Whether it is the Dhatu or Maatu, a distinct tonal effusion characterised it. The alap for Shankarabharana (Sri Dakshinamurthe) and Purvikalyani (Sri Meenakshim) were redolent with



T.R.Srinath



V.K.Raman

an old-world charm about him, the steady, unhurried pace that felicitating the unfoldment of the lyrical grandeur of the tested compositions. The concert itself left a devout feeling in the mind of the listener.

It was the same Purvikalyani that was intoned by S.G.Bhagyalakshmi (Aug 12, 8:30 a.m.). But what a contrast in its fleeting feeling! The 'devaranama' Manava Janma that exemplified the raga, however, was not wanting in its lyrical fecundity. That was the saving grace in her singing.

The veena recital of veteran M.J. Srinivasa Iyengar (Aug 16, 8:30a.m.) was a real treat, standing out for its technical aplomb. His alap for Kambodi was almost a model for a study in melodic finesse, all the familiar endearments of the raga coaxed into the aural frame. The stately Thyagaiah kriti Sri Raghavaraprimeya embellished with measured 'swaraprasthara' made for instant edification. It was a memorable recital.

Rupa Sridhar (Aug 17, 8:30 a.m.) does not appear to be a familiar name in the circuit. She is endowed with a cultivated voice as reflected in the reposeful alap for Simhendramadhya. Anandabhairavi was equally appealing. Yet the kritis Kamakshi and Kamala-Komala respectively

seemed to lack warmth. The veena recital of R.Saraswati (Aug 20, 9:25 a.m.) could not make any better impress. Her alap for Bilahari was rather commonplace, though Paridana, the kriti had a rollicking gait.

One noteworthy feature in the new crop of artistes in this part of the country, is the emergence of many talented flutists among whom V.K.Raman seems to have won instant popularity. His concert (Aug.21, 8:30 a.m.) was as reassuring as ever. The alap for Anandabhairavi saw him in an ebullient mood. He invested the familiar kriti Marivere with the right amount of melodic fervour. But his essay for Sunandavinodini (Devadi Deva) could not rise to expected heights, falling short in its aesthetic charm.

His senior colleague Gita Ramanand in her veena recital same day at 9:30 p.m was certainly in a better frame of mind as could be made from the effervescent glow that marked the opening number in Mayamala-vagoula. Nenarunchi (Malavi) sparkled as effectively to serve as a prelude to an evocative Behag (Bhavayaham). Kalyani revealed her firm hold on the idiom, the alap itself decorated with a flurry of lilting 'sangatis'. A perfunctory 'thanam' preceded the easy paced Pallavi (Taraka Brahma Swaroopini), the rhythmic forays acquiring a special delight, a disposition in which V.S. Rajgopal on the mridangam and Sukanya Ramgopal on the ghatam linked the laya with consummate skill and felicity.

The Sriranjini number by P.S. Satyavati (Aug 22, 9:25 a.m) was just passable, the seasoned singer not finding herself in her elements. Rajasri Josyar, next morning at 8:30 also seemed shaky as she started her concert with the imposing Hiranmayeem (Lalitha). But she soon warmed up as the 'swara' passages revealed. They swelled up into a convincing representation of the melody. Her alap for Vachaspati (Kantahudu) was as lucidly articulated to rise the recital to a

different plane.

The succinct, reposeful alap for Kambodi by T.V.Ramprasad (Aug.24, 8:30 a.m.) was impressive, fluently arriving at a homogeneous structure. The weighty piece O Rangashayi rein-



forced the trust of his fans as a promising talent. The measured 'swaraprasthara' enriched the raga's modal felicity.

The Bilahari number which was the highlight of T.R. Srinath's flute recital (Aug 25, 8:30 a.m) was a study in melodic exactitude. The brooding excursion through the raga's endearing nooks enhanced its aural elegance. S. Seshagiri Rao who gave Srinath violin support and Arjun Kumar who accompanied him on the mridangam, matched the skill of the flautist in the unfoldment of the structural depth.

R.S.Ramakanth was featured in the major slot at 10:10 the same morning. The Vasanta Varnam (Ninnu Kori) itself showed that he was in fine fettle, inspired with the prospect of having an experienced trio in B.Raghuram (violin), M.S.Ramaiah (mridangam) and B.N.Chandramouli (ghatam). It was a bright start. Huseni (Ramachandra) showed his fluency to arrive at the intended musical picture. But it was the alap for Ramapriya (Samodam) which really brought his

accomplishments to the fore. It was a robust rendition, the lyrical elegance of the composition receiving its due emphasis. It is also true that the seasoned accompanists lent Ramakanth splendid support, every minute of which he exploited to heighten the intensity of his vocal presence.

But the vocal recital by M.P. Harihara Iyer (Aug 26, 9:30) fell short in its sustaining quality. Manasaetulo (Malayamarutha) no doubt gave him a good start. But the 'swaraprasthara' attended to it was rather prosaic, falling short in resonance. Bilahari (Paridana) was less inspiring in its elucidation, the 'swara' passages again making one feel as if they were not memorised.

But M.D.Nanjundaśwamy (Aug 27, 8:30 a.m) was made of a more solid stuff. His alap for Shanmukhapriya (Velli Nayakane) was marked for his fluency of style, the kriti itself not short in its lyrical graces. Lucid 'gamaks' and a trite layakari were the other noteworthy features in his recital.

Later at 9:15 a.m the same day, it was Vasantha Ramanujam who was on the air. Her delineation for Kalyani was methodical, a blend into the bhakti-laden kriti Shivepahimam which was rendered with fervour. A greater degree of voice modulation in the upper reaches could have made the aural impact more soothing. Nalina Mohan's violin support, coupled with M.A. Krishnamurthy on the mridangam and Purushotham on ghatam shared the honours to help vocalist to arrive at a homogeneous aural edifice. But H.S.Mahalakshmi (Aug 30, 8:30 a.m.) failed to make her customary impact, an unsteady 'sruti' robbing the elegance of even an imposing melody like Lalitha (Nannubrova Lalithe). Though age has told on her aural capabilities, there is no doubt that her musical spirits are very much in fettle and should stand in good stead sooner than later.

ESSENCE

Tuneful Encounters-9

Coastal Colossus

S.N.Sivaswamy

I have seen neither Gokarna nor Mrurudeshwar, both hallowed places of worship on our coast. But I have had the immense pleasure of knowing two highly accomplished musicians hailing respectively from these two places. Ramesh Nadkarni belonged to Gokarna and Devendra Mrudeshwar to Murudeshwar.

I know that both of them had been working for many years in the music department of All India Radio at various stations. I was posted in Bombay as Deputy Director of Sales in the commercial Broadcasting Service and my office was located in the same building as AIR in Churchgate Reclamation, when I first met Ramesh Nadkarni in the company of Devendra Mrudeshwar.

It is amazing how the magic of sharing a mother tongue pulls together total strangers. Yes, the two musicians had been total strangers to me till I moved into my Bombay office. Of course, I had heard the vocal music programmes of Ramesh Nadkarni and the flute recital of Devendra Mrudeshwar many a time on the radio. Perhaps they too had heard of a Kannada officer of my name working in their organisation.

However, it was at the tea centre being run by the Government Tea Board near the Churchgate railway station that I heard them speaking to each other in Kannada. I introduced myself to them in Kannada and was delighted when they responded in chorus "of course, we know you!"

It seems they had been wanting to come to my office and say "hello" to me. But they were not sure whether I would be any different from other officers of my rank in Delhi and

Bombay who knew nothing about music but nevertheless rode the high horse and kept themselves behaving as though they belonged to a much superior human species!

All such imaginary barriers collapsed once we started talking in Kannada and exchanged views on subjects widely ranging between the patronage of the Mysore Palace and the Vachanagana of Mallikarjun Mansoor.

Ramesh Nadkarni, who passed away last year, was a highly dedicated musician, a disciple of Aman Ali Khan of the Bhendi Bazar gharana of Bombay, a style of singing with its own distinctive grammar, notable for its intricate swara patterns. There was only a handful of exponents of the gharana left after the expiry of Aman Ali Khan in the fifties, and Ramesh was the finest practitioner of that school of singing at the time. He was not only a great musician, but an unassuming and quiet gentleman, soft spoken, friendly and helpful by nature.

An additional quality that drew this gaunt, bespectacled Giant closer to me was his love for Carnatic music. He could speak with authority on Purandara Dasa and other southern composers. He himself had vastly contributed to the popularisation of devaranamas in Bombay.

Although I knew from chats with him that Ramesh Nadkarni liked Carnatic music, I was pleasantly surprised to find him squatting with me one evening at a chamber concert of Palghat K.V.Narayana Swamy at the National Centre for Performing Arts in the premises of the centre in Nariman Point. Narayana Swamy was in good form those days and gave us a

most enchanting recital. Ramesh was obviously enjoying every minute of it, but I became aware of the depth of his perception of true musical values, with no trace of prejudice about Carnatic music, when he swayed ecstatically to the strains of the immortal composition of Muthuswamy Dikshitar in Samaraga "Annapurna Visalakshi, Akhila Bhuvana Sakshi". He kept mumbling the refrain long after we had left the hall.

Even today I remember Ramesh Nadkarni's benign and smiling face as he remarked "Oh! What a beautiful song, so beautifully sung!" ■

Ring, Silver Mridangam and the Writer

The intro of a music review in an English daily mentioned about a couple presenting a gold ring and a silver mridangam to the awardee at a function held recently at Bangalore.

That this statement does not form a music review is a different matter and it is for the editor of this reputed newspaper to decide.

But the fact missed by the knowledgeable reviewer is that the silver mridangam (costing about Rs 15000-00) was contribution of many of the awardee's close friends and the couple had not contributed anything except posing with the mridangam.

"Pallavi may be called the crest jewel of Carnatic music—manodharma, creative talents, command over rhythm, skill and imagination in portraying the various facets of the raga and above all his intelligence.

N.Ramiah

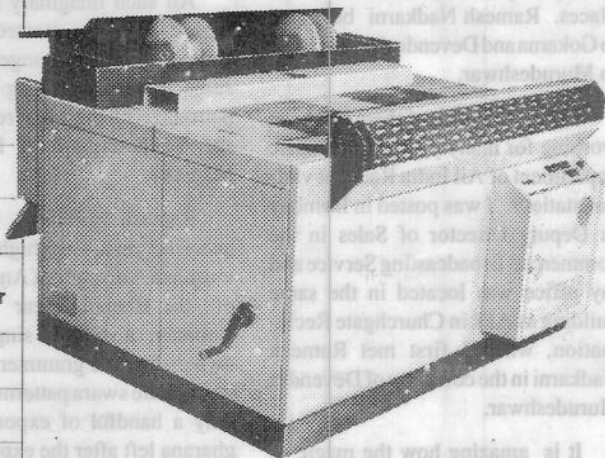
CEPL'S PHOTO PROCESSORS

SUPER STAGERED ROLLERS TRANSPORT SYSTEM PROCESSORS FOR FILM & PAPER

- NO SOCKS, NO BLANKET
- NO SOLUTION CARRY OVER
- NO EMULSION PRESSURE
- NO SPRING, NO 'O' RINGS
- NO CRYSTALLIZATION
- NO SCRATCHES OR JAMS

SOME OF OUR CUSTOMER LIST

1	Indian Space Research Ahmedabad, Gujarat	20" Reversal Processor Mural 50" Color Paper
2	Khekale Studio - Khamgaon, Maharashtra	12" Color Paper Processor RA-4
3	Udan Color Lab - Upleta,	12" Color Paper RA-4
4	Gajjar Processing Studio - Nadiad, Gujarat	20" Color Paper Processor RA-4
5	Color Art Processing Lab - Bombay, Maharashtra	12" Rapid Access Mural - 80" Color Paper RA-4
6	Rajkot Color Lab - Rajkot, Gujarat	20" Color Paper Processor RA-4
7	Akshar Process - Rajkot, Gujarat	20" Rapid Access Processor
8	Image Bank - Darjeeling, W. Bengal	12" Color Paper Processor RA-4
9	India Photo House - Bombay, Maharashtra	20" Color Paper Processor RA-4



BETTER REASONS TO SELECT THE BEST PROCESSOR

VARIOUS APPLICATIONS:

- Color Films & Papers.
- Color Reversal Films & Papers
- Black & White Films & Papers.
- Rapid Access Film & Papers. Aerial Films.
- Xray Films

CHOICE OF MODELS

To suit your requirement and space.

FLOOR MODELS with Processing widths of: 12" - 20" - 24" - 30" - 40" - 50" - 80"

TABLE TOP MODELS with Processing width of: 12" - 20" - 24"

TECHNOLOGY:

1. UNIQUE FEATURES: STAGGERED ROLLERS: avoid direct pressure on material emulsion eliminating possibility of scratches or processing marks.

SUBMERGED ROLLERS : eliminate the possibility of chemical crystallization due to oxidation.

SELF CLEANING CROSS-OVERS : Wash the rollers continuously with water, controlling solution carry-over and reducing stain level problem.

SEALED TANKS : The covered cross-over guide help and seal the tanks from oxidation and evaporation.

2. LOW MAINTENANCE: CEPL's simple, clean and durable design make them most easily serviceable. Easy access to all pcb boards, motors, pumps and heaters plug-in modules make replacement easy.

3. PERFECT OPERATION: Efficient heating circulation, filtration and auto replenishment with spotless drying.

4. ECONOMICAL: Less space due to compact design, low chemical volume due to small tanks and water and power saving due to stand-by system.



Charudarshan Engineering Pvt. Ltd.

OFFICE: BOMBAY
KIT KAT (JANTA) HSG SOC. PLOT 12 1ST FLOOR,
16, RAOD OPP GURUNANAK PARK TPS III,
BANDRA (W), BOMBAY 400 050
INDIA TEL. 6426551 FAX: (91-22) 644 3425 (CHARU)

ALL THESE NEGATIVE POINTS MAKE CEPL'S A POSITIVE PROCESSOR

IN LIGHTER VEIN

Instant Culture

Manu Vijay

While 'Quicker' and 'Faster' may be the buzz words for commerce and industry, the virus of the 21st century, seems to have also bitten the dance arena. Dancers are now required to churn out numbers racier than rap and reggae to meet the demands of yuppie audiences.

Shorter, quicker numbers, set to foot tapping, hip-swinging rhythms, shorter performances in pocket hanky sized stages for small, select audiences seem to be the corporate requirements. Dish out continental fare-a touch of the traditional, a dash of a group, a tea spoonful of folk and a pint of the contemporary, with com-

mentaries that read like the morning newspaper, and rake in barrelful of greenbacks to take home.

I think, we can safely assume that the 'instant' culture has come home to stay. Packaging and marketing are of prime importance - the glossier the better. The programme should be done, before our audience can spell and pronounce S-h-a-n-k-a-r-a-bha-r-a-n-a-m. The aftermath, with dinner and cocktails go on to the wee hours of the morning, but all's well that has good P.R. !

The latest stuff that seems to be lining the shelves, next to our usual MTR rava idly mix and ORKAY in-

stant jamun, is our own 'dhideer' version of Indian dance. Don't be surprised, while sauntering into Ahmed Bazaar, if you bump into a rack of 'Learn Bharathanatyam in 30 days' disks. I do remember audio cassettes of one complete marga being available for anyone who would like to have one at home and have a go at a tisra alaripu, but computer disks to teach adavus is dragging it a bit much. Couple the above features with a dictionary of dance vocabulary, and ready made costumes available in S.M.L and XL sizes (is Aiyvelu listening ?) and viva ! You have a dancer !

Soon, all you have to do is hook yourself on to the internet, and along with a Kenyan safari and the latest situation in Bosnia, you can learn the numbers choreographed by Guru so and so on his trip to Australia. Sounding cynical ? Not at all - if you can acquire a husband while channel surfing on the internet, can you not learn Bharathanatyam ? ■

Rich Musical Fare by Nakod Brothers



From L to R : Viswanath Nakod, Arjun Nakod
and Balachandra Nakod

Pandit Arjuna Nakod, the well-known Hindustani musician and drama artiste of yesteryears, must justly be proud of his four talented sons who are amongst the top-ranking musicians of Karnataka today. The

impressive performance of the Nakod brothers for the Bangalore Art Circle at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan on September 12 was an eloquent testimony to their achievements.

The programme started with Ranga Geetegalu, comprising drama songs rendered by Arjuna during his 30-year career as a theatre artiste. These nostalgic songs in classical mould were rendered with telling effect by Balachandra Nakod, an A Grade artiste in the AIR. His rich tonality made an indelible impact on the listeners.

The trio started for a bandish in Teental with Peshkar followed by chaturasya, khanda tishra and mishra beats. Later the brothers played the Kaydas of Delhi, Farookabad and Ajarada Gharanas and some of their own Kelas extended to the Nadas of temple bells.

The varieties of Nadas made the audience feel like dancing. They ended with Puray Gharana varieties of Gatt, Chakradhars while rendering Bols with gay abandon.

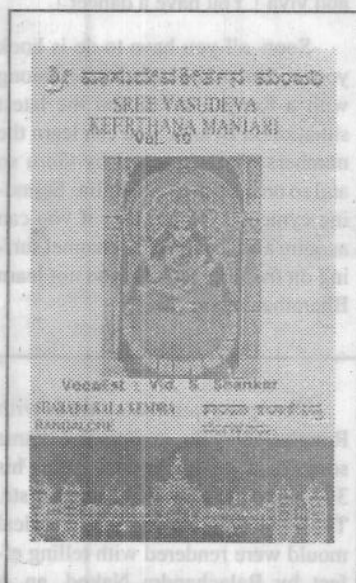
Seetha

Cassette



Causerie

Vasudeva
Keerthana Manjari



VASUDEVA KEERTANA MANJARI, Vol. 19: by S. Shankar. Produced by Sharada Kala Kendra, Bangalore - 78, Price Rs.30/-.

The volume number denotes that there have already been 18 such cassettes, covering a wide array of Vasudevachar compositions. As indicated by R.K.Padmanabha, Director of the Kala Kendra, the proposal is to complete 20 cassettes, the project having started around 1992.

It is indeed a remarkable achievement, something not given even to the great Trinity! It is almost for the first time in the annals of the history of music that such a vast selection of

songs of a single composer is made available in audio to the community. That the songs in these cassettes are separately reduced to notation and brought out in book form as a compendium enhances their usefulness to singers and students alike. No compliment would be too big to the joint efforts of Padmanabha and S.Krishnamurthy, the worthy grandson of the maestro who has lent his unstinted support in this venture.

Equally noteworthy is the fact that the rendition of each set is by a different vocalist, each a name to reckon with. Care has also been taken to select the songs for the sets in such a way that each can easily comprise a concert by itself.

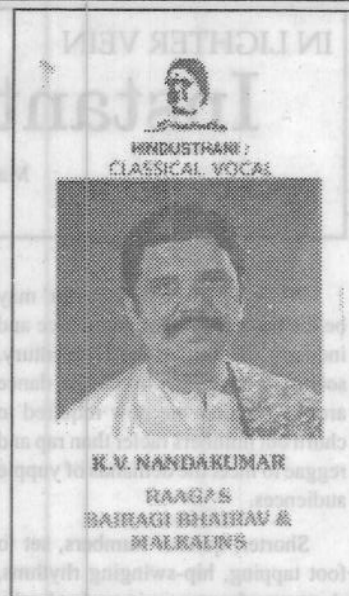
The set under review is assigned to S.Shankar, the second in the series so far as he is concerned. It starts with a Varnam in Ramapriya, followed by six other loveable compositions. Of the ragas, Shankarabharana receives a detailed alap, prelude to "Damodaramanisham", not heard much on the concert platform.

B.Raghuram (violin), N.Vasudev (mridangam) and R.A.Rajagopalan (ghata), accompanying the artiste make their presence felt by their controlled artistry. The cassette, as in the case of its 18 predecessors was released in a simple, but impressive function on Sept.29, 1996.

K.V.Nandakumar

HINDUSTANI VOCAL. By K.V.Nandakumar. Cassette. Shree Matha G-11 (Sarovar Apartments, Basavanagudi, Bangalore - 560 004) for Sangeeta Sagar, 95R102. Price Rs.50/-.

Vocalist Nandakumar is gifted with a rich and sonorous voice honed to 'sruti'. He has endeared himself to listeners by his sincere efforts to evoke emotional depth in his singing. As evidenced in Bairagi Bhairav and



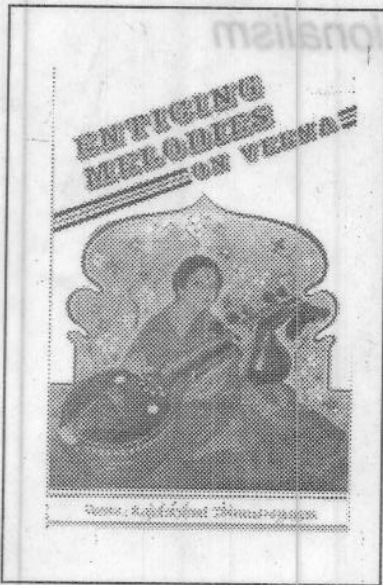
Malkouns, the two pentatonic ragas he has recorded for this cassette, he strives to achieve melodic richness by the judicious use of chiselled taans, sweet gamaks and enduring murkis. There is perfect balancing between the melodic and rhythmic aspects of music, a task which has been made easier for him by the understanding support he receives from Vyasamurthi Katti on the harmonium and M.Nagaraj on the tabala.

Enticing Melodes on Veena

ENTICING MELODIES ON VEENA: By Rajalakshmi Tirunaryanan in a cassette for Kanakagiri Prakashana of Malathi Madhavachar (1377, XIII Main / X Cross, BTM II Stage, Bangalore - 560076. Price 35/-.

Though Rajalakshmi, former Head of the Department of Dance, Drama and Music in the Bangalore University is a seasoned artiste, this is the first cassette she has to her credit. Obviously, quite a stranger to cadging!

Tinged with a touch of majesty, she starts the rendition with the popular Pada Varnam of Lalgudi G.Jayaraman in Charukeshi (Innum Enmanam) which has become popular with Bharathanatyam dancers all



over. The evocation of its euphonic elegance is a fine prelude to an impressive selection of ditties in Nata, Simhendramadhyama, Shankarabhara and Hindustani Kapi. The presentation stands out for fidelity of form and gentle 'meetu'. It is pleasant listening.

M.A.Krishnamurthy on the mridangam and R.A.Rajagopalan on the ghatam have provided competent rhythmic support to the noted vainika.

Flute

FLUTE by H.S.Venugopal for Pranava Live Cassettes, 200, East Park Road, XII Cross, Malleswaram, Bangalore - 560 003. Price Rs.30/-.

A perusal at the list of accompanists, at once reveals the flutist's affinity with the world of Bharathanatyam. Percussionists G.Gurumurthy (mridangam) and



S.V.Balakrishna (morsing) as also K.R.V.Pulikeshi as having providing assistance, are names heard more on the dance stage than in concert halls. But Raghuram (violin) and Srishaila (ghatam) are not as familiar with dancers.

Yet all of them combine well to enhance the sonority of Venugopal's flute recital. Even otherwise, the playing is free from jarring notes and marked for controlled tonal quality. The familiar Abhogi varnam (Evari Boda) makes for a steady start. Among the other pieces Purvikalyani (Gnanamosagarada) and Hindola (samajavaragamana) are catchy. A good effort for a first attempt.

S N C

A Gala Decennial

As many as six dance features and two solo Bharathanatyam recitals were featured in the Nriyanjali cum Rockfest 96 to mark the decennial celebrations of Sri Lalithakala Academy Trust of Mysore at the local Kala Mandira in the last week of July. The annual festival which was blessed

by the celebrated Rukmini Devi Arundale with the immortal dance-drama series of Kalakshetra 20 years ago, was inaugurated by R. Venkatraman, former President of India.

Two well-choreographed features on Ramayana (based on Swati Tirunal's Bhavayami Raghuramam) and Bhagavatam (episodes based on the compositions of Purandara Dasa and Kanaka Dasa) of Academy Director, Uma Rao gave a flying start to the gala fare. The pieces were greatly appreciated by a receptive audience, the team of experienced dancers giving a good account of their attainments.

Bharatanjali of B. Bhanumati of Bangalore, Damayanti Swayamvaram of Krishnaveni Lakshmanan of Madras, Annamaiah of Parvati Ghantasala and those of Revati Muthuswamy of Srirangam and Jayashri Narayanan of Pondicherry were other dance features. Lalitha and Vrinda Nanavati from Bangalore were the soloists.

The suffix Rockfes is in recognition of the memorable Festival of Karnataka organised by the Rasika Ranjana Sabha of Tiruchirapally in collaboration with the Academy in 1995. Since then there has been a healthy exchange of cultural ties between the two cities.

The Academy, like in the past, took the opportunity to felicitate several eminent personalities serving the cause of music and dance including Sharada Hoffman, Professor of Dance, Kalakshetra; N. Pattabhiraman of Sruti, Madras; R. Yagnaraman of Krishna Gana Sabha, Madras; vocalist R.K. Padmanabha of Bangalore and S.V. Narayanaswamy Rao of Sri Ramaseva Mandali, Bangalore.

Subscribe to
PHOENIX

VIRENDER MAHAJAN's Creative Eye Photography

Fusing Creativity & Professionalism



**The Difficult is a Routine Job.
The Impossible Takes a Few More Seconds**

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| ■ Commercial | ■ Free-lance |
| ■ Advertising | ■ Outdoor |
| ■ Photo Journalism | ■ Nature |
| ■ Editorial | ■ Medical |

Contact

C-4 F/65 Janak Puri New Delhi 110058
W-Z/34. Khyala Village, New Delhi 110018

☎ 5617566

Natya Niketan Creates a Record



Deepa Narasimhan

Natya Niketan of Revathi Narasimhan has the rare distinction of scoring four ranks in the examination of the Karnataka Higher Secondary Examination Board (Bharathanatyam) this year. A brief note on each of these proud alumni of the Basavangudi school is given below:

Manjula Kumar (Vidwat I rank), daughter of Jayalakshmi Kumar and the late S.Kumar was initiated into Bharathanatyam by Shymala Muralikrishna of Nritya Prakasha Varshini. She performed her 'ranga pravesha' in 1992.

Later she came under the tutelage of Revathi, passing her Vidwat in I rank. Besides taking part in the several dance-dramas produced by her gurus, Manjula has appeared in solo for well-known organisations like Suchitra, Natyanjali Festival of Chidambaram, Dasara Festival at Kulu (H.P), Ravindra Bharathi, Hyderabad, Kannada Sangha, Aurangabad,

Jaganmohan Palace, Mysore etc. She has also won several prizes in competitions, including that of Aryabhata Cultural organisation.

Sankhya S. Puranik, daughter of S.D. Puranik, is another student of Revathi who has secured I rank in vidwat. A graduate of choreography (I class), she has passed the junior grade in music and has been undergoing training in Kathak.

Sankhya has taken part in the several dance features of Natya Niketan like Navajeevana and Navaratna Malike for the TV, Vitthala Charite, Natyotsava at Hampi and Pattadakal, Vijayanagara Vaibhava at Madras, Vijayakalyana, Bombay, and Karnatakotsava, Dharwad. Her solo appearances include those for Abhinava Art Centre, and those of the Shivakami group. Sankhya has also choreographed a few ballets on mythological themes.

Deepa Narasimhan who has secured a III rank in Vidwat, is the daughter of Guru Revathi and K.Y.Narasimhan. She is a final year



L.S.Prakruthi



Manjula Kumar

B.E.student, though manages to find time for dance.

Deepa had her 'ranga pravesha' in May 1994 and since then regularly taking part in solo and group dances of her mother's dance school. They include several dance-dramas for TV, Tyaga Brahma Gana Sabha, and Nungumbakam, Cultural Association, Madras, etc. Her solos include the Every Friday Cultural Evening, the Indian Institute of World Culture, Pallavotsava, Mysore and the Lasya-Ranjani dance festival.

L.S.Prakruthi, daughter of L.V. Sriranga Raju, has secured a II rank in the Senior Grade this year. She is a first year PUC student.

Though she has been learning the art for nearly 10 years, Prakruthi has not yet performed her 'ranga pravesha'. But she has rich experience on the stage, having taken part in several performances of Natya Niketan like the Shivali festival, features on Dashavatara, Purandara Dasa, etc.

**Advertise in
PHOENIX**

From Here and There

Mumbai Beat

Artistes Honoured

Bandup Fine Arts, Mumbai presented its 1996 awards to artistes for their contribution to Carnatic music on the evening of September 14, 96 at the Bright High School, Bandup (W).

Gana Kalanidhi was conferred on Padmaja Srinivasan (vocal), Nadha Kalanidhi on C. Lakshminarayan (violin), Laya Kalanidhi on Tanjavur S. Subramanyam (mridangam) and Umayalapuram K Narayanaswami (ghatam).

The awards comprising a silver medallion and a plaque were presented by S.Seshadri, Hon Secretary, Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha.

Later, Bandup Fine Arts honoured S. Seshadri himself by conferring the title, 'Sangeetha Seva Rathnam' on him in recognition of his meritorious service to Carnatic music for over 53 years.

The evening's programme concluded with a vocal recital by Padmaja Srinivasan accompanied by C. Lakshminarayan (violin), Tanjore S Subramanyam (mridangam) and Umayalapuram K Narayanaswami (ghatam).

Forth coming Programmes Mumbai

Gayaka Samrat Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar's Birth Centenary Celebrations.

Three Day Music Festival
Nov 23, 96: Hyderabad Brothers (vocal) Sriram Parasuram (violin), K.V.

Prasad (mrudangam) N.Govindarajan (ghatam).

Nov 24, 96: Neyveli Santhanagopalan (vocal) Sriram Parasuram (violin), K.V.Prasad (mrudangam) N. Govinda-

rajan (ghatam)

Nov 25, 96: Kdadri Gopalnath (saxophone) Kanyakumari (violin) Guruvayur Dorai (mridangam) Mumbai N.M.Jayaram (kanjira) Bangalore Rajashekar (morching).
Venue: Indian Gymkhana Grounds, Matunga, Mumbai 400016.

Adarsha Fetes Senior Vocalist

Seethalakshmi Venkateshan, senior vocalist in Carnatic Music and a renowned teacher in the genre was conferred with the title "Sangeetha Laya Saamraagni" by the Adarsha Samsad in Bangalore recently.

The conferment of the title formed part of the Adarsha Bharatiya Samskritika Samsad's three-day Sangeetotsav that began on October 4. Well-known violinist A Veerabhadraiah felicitated the artiste who has been the recipient of many prestigious honours in her distinguished career. Seethalakshmi thanked the organisers for the honour done to her and Veerabhadraiah for his nice words about her.

Though beset with a soar throat, Seethalakshmi rose to the occasion to give a full-fledged concert, reeling of as many as 12 number, many preceded by alap and decorated with 'swara korvais'. Saraswatim (Athana), Guruleka (Gourimanohari) and Sogasuchuda Tharama (Kannadagoula) among them may be recounted. Sahana (Raghupate Rama) and Varali (Mamava Meenakshi) were the ragas to receive a detailed airing. The Bhairavi piece was specially impressive.

Her student Padmini who lent Seethalakshmi vocal support was given enough scope to display her talent.

The Sangeetotsav began with a

saxophone recital by Mangalore K.Anantharam. Youthful T.V. Ramprasad flanked by H.K. Venkataram on the violin, N.G.Ravi on the mridangam and K.N. Krishnamoorthy on the ghatam was the attraction on the second day.

Starting with a Vasudevachar Varnam in Nalinakanti, Prasad regaled the listeners with a rich repast. Neekeladaya (Kadanakuthoohala), Amba Neelayatakshi (Nilambari), and Teliyaleru (Dhenuka), provided him the warming-up for a neat Pantuvarali (Vaadera) enriched by an appealing 'niraval'. Madhyamavati (Palinchi Kamakshi) was the main item for the day and the confident manner he disposed the piece ensured that he had arrived.

Kusuma Rao

Raghavendra Aradhana

Raghavendra Swami Seva Samithi Koramangala celebrated the Raghavendra Aradhana on Aug 31, 96 with a delightful vocal concert by Bhagyalakshmi Gundu Rao, accompanied by Basavanagudi G.Nataraj (violin) and Nagendra Udupa (Mridangam).

S.Krishna Singh chairman of the Samithi spoke about the organisation and V.Anand, secretary proposed a vote of thanks.

Know Your Artistes

Mangalore K. Anantharam



Mangalore K. Anantharam, the saxophone artiste, was born in 1946 in Kakkada, a small village near Mangalore. His father, Kakkada Dharanappa, who was himself a Nagaswaram player, initiated Anantharam into playing Nagaswaram.

Later Anantharam underwent gurukula training in vocal music under Kanchana Venkatasubramanyam Iyer at Kanchana in 1967.

Soon Karkala Narayanaswamy, a nagaswara player took him to Karkala to teach nagaswaram for six years and by 1973 Anantharam became a fullfledged nagaswaram player.

Puttur Venkatappa Dogra, with his newly acquired saxophone at that time was a rage. Anantharam adapted saxophone never to look back.

He is a 'B' grade artist in AIR. Recognising his talent, Keshavananda Thirtha Swamiji of Yadner Mutt, conferred the title, Saxophone Samrat in 1992. Later the title 'Saxophone Sarvabhooma' by Kattilu Durga Parameshwari Temple came his way, conferring its Kattilu Gopalakshina

Asranna, chief priest of the temple.

He gave his first concert in Bangalore at Malleshwaram Sangeetha Sabha, in 1993 and last year he played at the Mylapore Fine Arts, at Chennai. He has played in almost all the sabhas at Chennai, including Nungambakkam Cultural Academy, The Indian Fine Arts Society, Narada Gana Sabha, Rasika Ranjani Sabha, Karthik Fine Arts, Kalarasana, Nadopasana, to name a few. He has played in Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeetha Sabha, Mumbai,

Mangalore K Anantharam
Sri Venkataramana Temple, Car Street
Mangalore 575001 © 0824-441922

K.R.V. Pulikeshi



K.R.V. Pulikeshi, young and talented dancer hails from a family of cultural background.

Son of Raghusutha and K.R. Padmini, a big name in the literary field, Pulikeshi was initiated into Bharatanatyam by his brother, K.R.S. Prasanna himself a reputed Bharatanatyam dancer.

After initial training under Lalitha

Srinivasan, a leading exponent of the Mysore style and later under Narmada. Pulikeshi graduated from the Natya Institute of Kathak and Choreography headed by Maya Rao.

Pulikeshi has performed in many prestigious dance festivals like the India International Trade Fair, Nitya Nritya, Pattadakol Dance Mahotsava and National Jamboree.

He has toured France, England and Switzerland giving performances with his brother.

Pulikeshi, apart from being a dancer, is a good nattuvangam artiste too. He learnt the intricacies of nattuvangam from his brother and the mridangam vidwan B.R. Seshadri.

He has been trained in Martial Arts of Manipur by Sonour Chand and Khilton Nanymoithem and in abhinaya by T.K. Mahalingam Pillai.

He has assisted in choreographing many ballets. He is now imparting training to students in his Shantala Arts Academy. He was recently felicitated by 'Kinkini' during its 10th Anniversary.

K.R.V. Pulikeshi
7 Pulikeshi Road, I Main
Yeshwanth-pur, Bangalore 560022,
© 364758

Attentive Cigarists

Music and dance institutions are requested to send their programmes of next month for publication to:

The Editor, PHOENIX,
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar,
Bangalore 560009,
before the first week of the month.

No More Buckling while Mounting your Transparencies

Super Seal 101

Professional Card Board Mounting Unit

- Heavy Duty
- Thermostat
Controlled
- Illumination
for
Slide Viewing
- Sleek
Streamlined
Construction
- Attractive
Colours
to Decorate
Modern
Lab System



Designed and Crated by

FOTO Image

138 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009 © 2263696

Dealers: Photo Speed Co, Brigade Road, Bangalore 560001 © 5580505; R.K. Photo Guide, 5th Main Road, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009; Graphic Instruments, 12A State Bank Street, Anna Salai, Madras 600002 © 845309; Sangam Electronics, M-11 Palika Bazar, Connaught Place, New Delhi 110001 © 332 2090; Jitens, B-3/7 MCH Market, Chikkadapally, Hyderabad 500020 © 040-633043

INDIAN PHOTOGRAPHY & CINEMATOGRAPHY

STEPS INTO IT'S

17th Year

of Uninterrupted publication.

It is read by over 40,000 readers
all over the country who
understand the products you offer

Advertise in
**Indian Photography
& Cinematography**

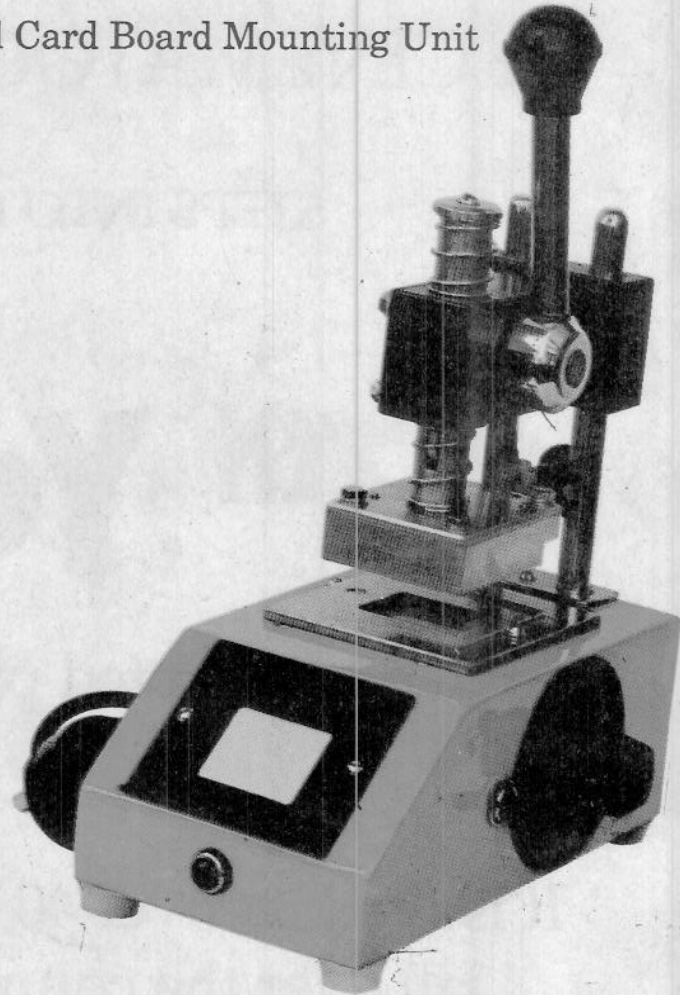
138 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009 © 2263696

No More Buckling while Mounting Transparencies

SUPERA SEAL 101

Professional Card Board Mounting Unit

- Heavy Duty
- Thermostat Controlled
- Illumination for Viewing
- Sleek Streamlined Construction
- Attractive Colours to Decorate Modern Lab System



Designed and created by

FOTO Image

138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009 ☎ 2263696

Dealers: **BANGALORE:** Photo Speed Co, Brigade Road, Bangalore 560001 ☎ 5580505: R.K.Photo Guide, 5th Mai, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009: **NEW DELHI:** Sangam Electronics, M-11 Palika Bazar, Connaught Place, New Delhi 110001 ☎ 332 2090: **HYDERABAD:** Jitens, B-37 MCH Market, Chikkadapally, Hyderabad 500002 ☎ 040-7633043

M. Ramanathan

Anniversary Bumper Issue

Phoenix

JOURNAL ON MUSIC & DANCE

Rs 10-00

Nov-Dec 96



INTRODUCING A NEW DIMENSION TO IMAGING TECHNOLOGY

..... A Professional Course in Photography,
Photo Finishing and Photo Lab Management

The continuously growing demand for skilled mini-lab technicians and Lab Managers will soon be fulfilled.

The Institute of Imaging Technology introduces a short term professional course to impart intensive training in the various aspects of Photography, Photo finishing and Photo Lab Management.

The brainchild of Nippon Group, who have rich experience in marketing Konica products in India and successfully operating a chain of Konica Color Labs in the South, the Institute of Imaging Technology is promoted as a premier centre for professional education of this sort.



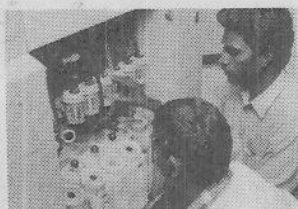
Housed in a spacious, air-conditioned facility, and equipped with a Studio and Library, this is the first of its kind in India, providing a great opportunity to learn the nuances of the art.

The 3 - week course is designed to create scientifically trained technicians and management personnel.

The syllabus covers

- Intensive theory on Photography, Photo Finishing and Lab Management
- Hands-on training using the latest Konica Nice Print system - and
- Demonstration through sophisticated training and evaluation aids

**Enrol today, Rise to become
an entrepreneur on your own merit!**

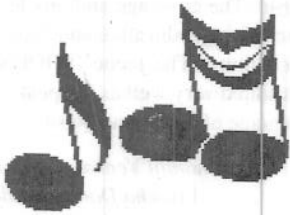


For more details, contact



INSTITUTE OF IMAGING TECHNOLOGY

8 A, Bragathambal Street, Nungambakkam, Madras-600 034 Telephone : 8233656 Fax : 044-499 1071 / 499 2351



PHOENIX

Journal on Music and Dance

Vol 2

Nov-Dec 1996

No 1&2

Contents

4	Readers' Write
5	Editorial-Marching Ahead
6	Calling AIR
9	Down Memory Lane
12	At the End of it All
13	Focus on Music - Laya
17	Restless Genius
20	Naadanta Fall in Line
23	Ragavisleshana - Hindola
24	Radel's Tala Mala LT - 15
26	From Concert Hall to Cricket Field
27	Gangubai Opens Music School
28	Know Your Artistes
30	Yakshagana in New Garb
31	Rewarding Experience

S.N.Chandrasekhar
67 Basappa Layout
Bangalore 560019 © 6675758
Editor

Bangalore K Venkatram
183, 8th Cross, II Bl, Jayanagar
Bangalore 560011 © 6630079
Associate Editor

N.Sundarraj
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009 © 2263696
Managing Editor

B. Rajashekar
© 2216459
Advertising Manager
A.P.Rao
741, 7th Cross, III Block
Koramangala, Bangalore 560034
© 5532658

Representatives

Geeta Raja
9 Chhaya, Jam-e-Jamshed Road
Matunga, Bombay 400019
© 412 2074

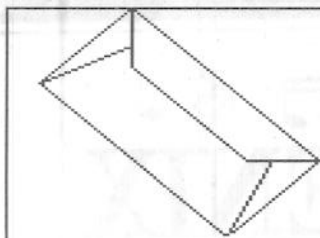
Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00
Three Years: Rs 140-00

Please send all remittances to
PHOENIX

The Circulation Manager
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009 © 2263696

(Cheques to be drawn on
'PHOENIX')
RN 45468/87

Cover Photo
RAJIV TARANATH
by Krishna Potadar



READERS Write

Self Audition

PHOENIX is fine and fascinating to look at and enjoy reading every page. The cover page is so fine and superb, credit should go to N. Sundar Raj. It might have taken lot of time to beautify the cover pages.

The Associate Editor, Bangalore K. Venkatram is both a reputed musicologist and a great name in music-percussion, besides being a good writer in English and compliments to S.N. Chandrasekhar for his fine editorials.

Your editorial 'Self Audition' (June 96) raised the all - important issue very succinctly. What some of us were hesitating to write about has been done by you. It deserves urgent action by the authorities, how so ever delicate the position may be.

In fact what is true of AIR is true of DD also. Probably the AIR and DD broadcast classical music programmes late in the night deliberately to avoid criticism as very few will listen at that time.

More such write ups regularly may wake up the slumbering bosses and big wigs and make them act.

Anantharam, Bangalore.

Glory of Indian Music

I commend M.C. Narasaraju of Chirala for his article, 'The Glory of Indian Music'. The art of music is the heart of Indian culture. Saint Thyagaraja, Muthuswamy Dikshitar, Shama Sastry, Tansen and Baiju Bawra are some of the most brilliant stars of the first magnitude in the large sky of Indian music.

Valmiki has sung Ramayana. Vyasa has tuned the melodies of Mahabharata. Jayadeva's Geetha Govinda is immortal and unique. Mali's flute takes us back to Krishna's flute melodies in Brindavan.

The melody of mandolin Srinivas, the fingering technique of Veena Doreswamy Iyengar and that of Kadri Gopalnath on Saxophone and some of the modern techniques displayed in playing clarinet, flute and veena show what a large scope there is to delineate ragas and reach their depths.

This in itself is a testimony to the glory of Indian Music.

The annual subscription of Phoenix, Rs 50-00 is so low that every one may desire to subscribe to the journal.

Sponsors like Somnath, Kulkarni, Rama Rao and V. Krishnan deserve every commendation and this would maintain the dignity and respect of the esteemed journal.

Some contemporary geniuses have been over looked and they have been forgotten in the history of music.

Mention may be made of Swara simha Kuthi Anantha Sastry of Bangalore, Pranavanada Kalabhi-chakshana B.R. Govindaswamy of Chikballapur who was appearing in most of the concerts of Chittoor Subramanya Pillai and other renowned musicians of Bangalore.

The prestige of Phoenix will be heightened if columns are set apart to highlight such geniuses.

H.N. Rajanna, Bhadravathi.

Noble Cause

It is nice to note that you are working for a noble cause by bringing

out a beautiful journal on dance and music. The coverage and articles are entertaining, educative and depicting our culture. The name 'PHOENIX' has suited very well as it 'speaks' the language of dance and music.

*Mahanthi Venkateswara Rao
Visakha Dance Academy
Visakhapatnam*

Music Conference Concerts

Opinions may differ on the quality of each of the main evening concerts recently concluded at the Bangalore Gayana Samaja. But it is unanimous that the vocal concert of S. Shankar was extremely satisfying, sumptuous and as a katcheri should be. He has silenced the organisers, who lean only towards "foreign artists", and has proved many points over them including attracting a sizeable audience. This concert should give a phillip to more Karnataka musicians.

*Anantharam
Bangalore*

A Clarification

Anantharam in his letter (July, Aug 96) has made a note that some organisations fill in the programmes with artistes from outside Karnataka and pointing out Odakathur Mutt as one wherein all the fourteen programmes were studied with outside artistes.

We wish to clarify that, as at Odakathur Mutt our "Jothi Manram Hall" was given to Sri Guruvayur appan Bhajan Samaj who conducted the above said programmes for their 19th Year Gokulashtami Celebrations and not Odakathur Mutt.

*Secretary
Odakathur Swamigal Mutt
Bangalore*

Marching Ahead

Editorial

With the present issue, a bumper, PHOENIX enters its second year. The year that has gone by has been eventful to the nascent journal and its handful of promoters in more ways than one. Though fraught with trepidation it was launched amidst fanfare, thanks to the hospitality of friends in the Bangalore Gayana Samaja. Since then the editors have spared no efforts to see that the journal serves the cause to the best of their ability. It is gratifying that almost everyone who peruses its pages has a good word about its editorial quality, usefulness and low price. But the editors are by no means complacent. A wider variety, interests and range are the journal's objectives. They can be achieved if more and more youngsters come forward to write for it. That will also pave the way for the blossoming of serious art criticism for the future. But the editors are aware that it is not easy to persuade youngsters to the task.

The journal has been received well, there is no doubt. But financially, it is very much in the red. Subscriptions are trickling, but the proceeds on that count can hardly meet the cost of production. And that is all that is needed to keep the show on, as all other services including the outlay on photographs and DTP are not charged. What has kept the hopes of the promoters high is the unsolicited sponsorship of some issues. These sponsors were magnanimous in their offers, which in many cases for sure is not a one time offer! In the absence of substantial Ads these voluntary sponsorships have been an impetus to the promoters. PHOENIX hopes there would be more sponsors in the years to come.

The readers would have seen that the issues are almost regular. If the copies have not reached the subscribers on time, it is as much due to postal vagaries as the yet to be fixed logistics involved in the production. However, ample care is being taken to see that the schedule is not upset at any cost.

But the one department where the promoters have had to face a total blank is advertisement. The journal's PR has utterly failed to tap the goodwill properly. All it can do at this juncture is to appeal to institutions and commercial houses connected with or interested in the twin arts to use its pages for their publicity. Appeals to this effect are being made from time to time through the pages of the journal. But the response, alas, has not been encouraging. If some such promotion is forthcoming and with the goodwill it has already been enjoining, PHOENIX is sure to march ahead.

S.N. Chandrasekhar



Calling AIR

S.N.Chandrasekhar

Divyanama Sankeertana of Thyagaraja, a series that is being broadcast by the Chennai station of AIR has turned out to be so absorbing, so elevating that for sure it should have become a 'must' for lovers of music. Rightly so, as it has been planned and executed by two well-known musical personalities in T.S. Parthasarathy and Balamurali Krishna. Among the singers could be found quite a few familiar voices, singly and severally.

By the time of going to the Press, as many as 14 programmes have been through, though one is not sure how many more are to follow! Even so, the half an hour slot every Tuesday at 9-30 pm which is relayed from the local station as well is worth sacrificing all other priorities in the day to listen to.

The slot itself is at the expense of a time-honoured National Programme of Talks. Which should give an idea of its importance. And if many listeners have missed it, it is worthwhile approaching the authorities for rebroadcast.

Equally rewarding was a programme on Ashtapadis. The credit for that again should go to the Chennai station. Produced by S. Janakiraman (Sep 4, 8-30 am) it was imaginatively conceived, attributing the Nayika to each of the gems of Jayadeva which could be of particular interest to dancers. An experienced team of vocalists like Madurai G.S. Mani, P.S. Narayanaswamy, Prema Hariharan and Bushan K. Kalyanaraman was in charge of the rendition which was noted for its meaningful diction. The raga in each case complemented the rasa underlying the composition.

In the routine listening post, the



Sithalakshmi Venkateshan

top place should be given to veteran Thitte Krishna Iyengar (Sep 6, 8-30 am). Flanked by M.Nagaraj on the violin and Ravishankar on mridangam, the nonagenarian's rendition of Ragamalika was so impressive and so impactful that age for sure has not



M.S.Govindaswamy

withered his spirits. Indeed, he is still relevant!

The Anandabhairavi piece gave Sitalakshmi Venkateshan a steady start later at 9-15 am. But the alap for Janjhooti was not on as solid a ground. Nor did the piece Palisemma build up confidence in the senior artiste. Geeta Shamprakash's veena recital (Sep 7, 8-30 am) took on a bright note. Her alap for Thodi stood out for its clarity, the easy - paced Thanam helping her to lend a well-reasoned imagery to the raga. The kriti Meenalochane had a lively gait to rise the level of the concert. Shaila Subramanyam's Pantuvarali piece Saramegan at 9-30 was as enduring, though a few slips in 'swarasthana' were disconcerting.

The National programmed of Dinanath Mishra (Hindustani vocal) the same night could hardly measure above the pales of mediocrity. True, he has a pleasant voice, but its range is limited as could be made out from the initial Puriya-Dhanashri. The alap fell short in its tonal felicity. Bageshri was a shade better, the tilt in the 'layakari' heightening its aural charm.

The Jalatarang recital of Venugopal (Sep 10, 8-30 am) started with an Eshamanohari piece in style. A composition of B. Devendrappa, it bristled the alap and Thanam in Dharmavati, rendered with mix-up trills in the 'kalpanaswaras'. However, as it happens, an unfamiliar kriti (Pavanatmaja?) was the undoing in the instrumental recital. Mysore Nagaraj's violin accompaniment provided enjoyable moments.

Nadathanumanisham and Nidhi Chala (Kalyani) by T.D. Alavandar (9-30 am) bristled in the familiar



Padma Gurudutt

Madurai Mani's intonation. But it could do proud to neither. Pushpa Kashinath on Veena (1-30 pm) revealed competent instrumental command in Bantureeti (Hamsanada).

The violin solo of M.S. Govindaswamy (Sep 11, 8-30 am) was notable for its tonal quality. Gajananayutham (Chakravaka, termed Vegavahini by Dikshitar) stood out for its raga 'bhava'. The broadcast was neatly balanced with M.A. Krishnamurthy's mridangam support.

At 9-30 am Rukmini Srivatsan's



Neela Ramgopal

Saveri (Sri Rajagopala) as also a mridangam solo by S.S. Anandaraj had their lively spell. The inevitable cut-cut due to high-power transmission failure took its toll, but the usual regret announcement was conspicuously absent. It is strange that despite the rapid advancement of technology, the AIR has no standby for such contingencies. It is high time that the matter receives attention.

Padma Narayan's Sadbhaktiyu (Poochi Iyengar), was tuneful, a crisp 'chitteswara' adding to its lively gait. The veena recital of S. Rajalakshmi of Mysore (9-30) was delectable. Kambodi was the main raga, exemplified in Lambodaramavalamba. It is a pity that the Tamboora drone was inaudible. The accompanying morching need not have gone on non-stop from beginning to end. It did not help enlivening the laya. Tumkur Ravishankar on the mridangam was especially consistent.

Usha Ramamurthy's Manonmani (Shubhapanthavari) of Muthiah Bhagavata on Gottuvadya (Sep 12, 9-15 am) was passable. Nor was there much to write about Evarura (Mohana) that followed. V. Desikachar's flute (Sep 13, 8-30 am) was melodious, Sarasadala-nayane 'raga bhava'. Uma Gopaldaswamy (9-15 am) chose Pantuvarali for elaboration, for Ramanatham of Dikshitar. It was pleasant. The study of Dhanyasi by T.S. Rama (10 pm) which included a facile alapana by K.V. Narayanaswamy was quite informative.

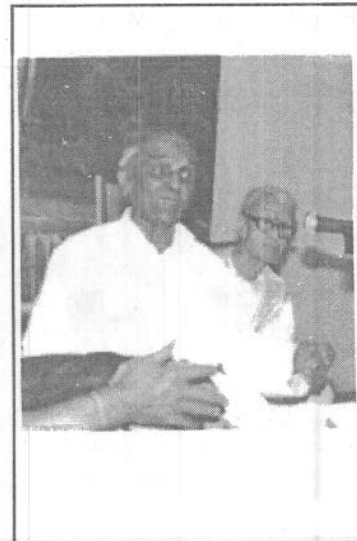
Radhika Rajanarayan's veena recital (Sep 14, 8-30 am) included an infrequent piece Mayamma Nannu Brovamma (Natakuranji) of Shyama Sastry. It is a pity this lovely piece is not heard often. The Kanada thillana of Lalgudi pulsated with its innate 'raga bhava'. M.Ramesh chose Marubalka (Sriranjini) and Kalyani (Dayamado Ranga) for his vocal (9-30 am). Both the concerts were above average.

Padma Gurudutt (Sep 15, 8-30 am) reeled of some pieces on Devi to



Uma Gopaldaswamy

fall in line with the 'Gouri puja'. Neepadame Gati (Nalinakanti) of G.N.B. Parvati Palisemma (Shanmukhapriya) and Pahi Parvati (Arabhi) of Swati Tirunal glowed in their raga 'bhava'. P.S. Vasantha was in the nick (10-10 am) as she intonated Purvikalyani and Hindola. The announcement was Deshadi for the Shyama Sastry kriti (Purvikalyani) proved all wrong. Nor was the Vilamba Chapu gait which was rendered, properly announced, no doubt a lapse on the part of the artiste. The raga-thana-pallavi in Hindola for a trikala, tishra



Thitte Krishna Iyengar



R.R. Keshava Murthy

in khanda jampe was neatly executed, negotiating Bowli, Shahana and Kanada in short spells. The broadcast was disrupted with the usual cut-cut and an intrusion of a Jaltarang for some unknown reason.

The South Zone hook-up (10 pm) featured a delectable veena recital by V. Maheswari with Chellappa of Madurai on mridangam. The Valachi varnam of Lalgudi, Sri Mahaganapatim of Mysore Maharaja (Athana) and Visveswara Rakshamam (Kanada) of Dikshitar were rendered sans alap or swaras. Rara Rajeevalochana (Mohana) of



V. Desikachar

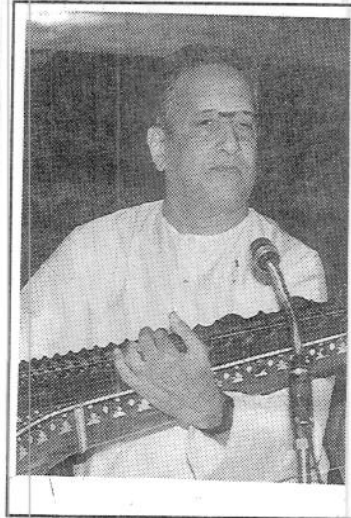
Vasudevachar (announced as Thyagaraja's!) was rendered devoutly with alap and swara 'korvais'. It was a neat, nicely balanced recital.

Neela Ramgopal (Sep 18, 9-30 pm) revelled in a rare Saranga Tarangini. It was an aesthetic treat. The Shahana varna gave Chitra Lingam (Sep 20, 9-15 am) on her veena a tidy start, the following Mohana-Kalyani piece being more pleasing, coaxing as it did the very crux of the soulful melody. The alap for Bindumalini (Enta Muddu) acquired a special delight, the kriti receiving the right dose of swaraprasthara to rise the concert to a lingering mood., Rajakesari on the mridanga was in fine touch.

The National Programme on Sep 21 (9-30) featured a veena recital by R. Visweswaran. Dhenuka (Theliyaleru) gave him a sedate start. But the alap for Kambodi received a reposeful airing, all the endearing facets of the raga combining to heighten its aura. The Pharas piece was a fitting finale to the thoughtful presentation.

Veteran R.R. Keshavamurthy was in, an ebullient mood when he started his violin solo (Sep 25, 8-30 am). Manasa-Manasa, the Vardhini piece fitted ideally into that frame of mind and it was run through with casual disdain. The short alap for Deepak (Kalalanerchi) brought greater restraint in his approach, though the dash was in tact. As always, one could only imagine what a treat it would be to listen to this 'sadhaka' if only there was a little more restraint!

Saraswathi Ramachandran (9-30 am) is certainly not a familiar name. She has a mellow voice as found in the rendition of Kanjadalayatakshi. But her alap for Shanmukhapriya (Vadane) betrayed an unsteady 'sruti'. The raga 'bhava' was also



R. Visweshwaran

elusive, though the kriti was very much on the traditional track.

The flute recital of K.P. Upadhyaya (Sep 27, 9-30 am) could not account for a good form. True, the Navarasa-kannada piece, something ideal for the flute, revealed a steady blowing technique. The alap for Gourimanohari (Guruleka) also had some lilting moments. But the notes in the upper reaches betrayed a screenc which robbed all the nuances in the area. H.K. Narisimha-murthy's violin accompaniment was a highspot of the fare. But R.A. Rama-mani's refined vocalism stood out in relief in her opening Kannada number Intakante. It was an impressive start, the masterly Thyagaiah piece Ksheenamai (Mukhari) was so tuneful and so full of emotion, that the rendition left an indelible impact. A rewarding recital indeed. ■

Attention Organisers

Music and dance institutions are requested to send their programmes to the Editor, PHOENIX, 138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009, before the first week of every month.



Down Memory Lane

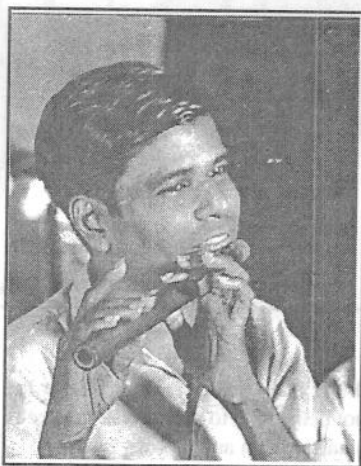
Bangalore K Venkatram

Several interesting anecdotes spring to my mind when I recollect my association with Mali. Just as I joined the Indian Telephone Industries in 1957, violin T. Gururajappa had returned from Trichy to join the local AIR.

Gururajappa and myself used to accompany on violin and mridangam in concerts of B.N. Suresh (flute) and others. Once Mali sent word to me for a concert at Erode. While I was hesitant, as I had to attend the office next morning (Monday) at 7-30 am, Mali assured of our return by the Trichy mail scheduled to arrive at around 5-30 am. He persuaded me to accept adding that Gururajappa who was coming for violin, also had a live broadcast at 7-30 am.

As we landed late night (very early morning) at Erode and moving towards the car, some Sabha people requested us to see that the recital was a success. There were apparently two parties in the Sabha opposed to each other and one of them had reported to police about possession of alcohol (it was a prohibited area!) Around 8 am next morning when we were at our breakfast, the Sabha friends requested Mali to give his best that day. Mali in his usual reposeful way asked to be provided with drinks to rise to the occasion. They managed to get a doctor's prescription and brought several pegs for Mali. The programme was to commence at 4-15 pm and Gururajappa, Alangudi Ramachandran (ghatam) and myself were ready by 3-30 pm. The organisers arrived by 3-30 pm only to find impossible to get Mali's room opened. He was fast

asleep. With herculean efforts, we forced open his room around 4-30 pm. Readying Mali was no easier and by the time we reached the venue it was 6 pm. A huge crowd was waiting in the hot Sun from 3-30 pm. We got on the dais at 6-15 pm and it took another 15 minutes for Mali to start blowing his instrument. The audience



Mali

was as restless as we on the dais were. Mali started after lot of initial bustlings and tumultuous confusion. 'Ninnukori' (Mohana) was taken up in a ticklish gait. The first line 'Ninnukoriyu-nnamura' was rendered, first two counts in Chatusra, the next four counts from the ring finger to the completion of first Dhrutha in thrishra vilamba and the last two counts, the second dhrutha in thrishra madhyakala, leaving an impression that the speed variations were going wrong! He would play on and asked Gururajappa who played the full line in a single common speed to repeat. Mali would not relent and demanded repetition on

violin.

Such mathematical renditions were not common those days. I requested Alangudi to keep the thalam and played the mridangam almost beating the pulse with a sign to Gururajappa to just follow. This went on for a full 30 minutes to complete the ethugada swaras.

People were all restless as we ourselves were. Then followed "Parathpara" (Vachaspathi) in such a slow tempo, that for sometime we were wondering whether it was alapana or kriti. After such intriguing items followed an alapana of Kambodhi. The calm serene atmosphere built up by Mali in the mandhrasancharas made everyone forget all that preceded. That was Mali. It was nearing 9 pm and I was worried about my return journey. When I reminded Mali of the time, he took up the microphone and explained that though he was prepared to play any length of time his accompanists were demanding an early closure. The audience bounced back and one of them got up and threatened of dire consequences if we did not oblige.

But Mali continued, took up an alap for five minutes, followed up with thanam for three minutes and rounded off a pallavi, swaras, thrikala all in five minutes and by 9-30 pm sounded the mangalam.

Gururajappa was just checking his remuneration and I hastened him to hurry up to catch the train. As we entered the platform, the train was moving and we got into a ladies compartment only to be chastised by the occupants. We managed to get down

at the next stop and moved to our reserved compartment. When I met Mali after two days, I asked him when he had returned from Erode. He was surprised and asked me how I knew that he had gone to Erode!

One evening Chowdiah drove down from his Ayyanar College in Basavanagudi to my Visweswarapuram residence and asked me to rush. Getting into the car, I asked what the matter was. Driving slowly, he lamented at the news of the death of Flute Mali. Despite all his misdemeanors, Mali's artistry is inimitable and his contribution to the fluteline technique a great asset. It is unfortunate that we lost him. He showed me a copy of "Janavani" carrying a photo and the obituary of Mali.

We landed in the K.V. Iyer's Vyayamashala where Mali was lodged and tapped the door. It was a laughing Mali who opened the door and explained that it was he who had sent the message to the Press! Some one had told Mali that his 'ayushya' (life span) would increase if people talked about his death. Chowdiah got infuriated and blamed Mali and the entire return route, it was nothing but choice epithets on Mali!

Different Story

A concert at an old Madras Sabha had a different story. As usual the concert commenced one and half hour late and in a place where the laya vyavahara was involved, it was the 'Koraippu' in kalpanaswaras. In a monotonic phrase, Mali resorted to nadai-bhedha with a ticklish "Karavai". The violinist could not reproduce the actual gait and Mali was adamant. A skirmish followed. the violinist said that all that is produced in flute cannot be reproduced in violin. Mali would not accept and challenged that he would play the violin and demonstrate it.

The violinist countered the challenge and asked if Mali could play all that he played in violin. Mali accepted the challenge. The intelligent violinist bowed the violin with two different swaras on two different strings and produced a 'chord' with the flute on hand and realising that he cannot reproduce this, Mali jokingly questioned why the violinist was playing a harmonium.

The violinist spontaneously retorted that it was known that Mali was



GNB

drunk but was he so inebriated as to not being able to distinguish between a harmonium and violin.

Mali repeated his demand that he would play the concert himself without the violin. Here was a different story. The violinist thundered that the concert should either be cancelled or he be allowed to play for the rest of the concert. He threatened the secretary to sue him as his name had been published and the concert had to go on with him. After persuasions both came back to continue the concert. There are several anecdotes in Mali's chacquered career. Mali was a good violinist; infact he had given an exclusive solo violin recital at the City Institute pandal in Chamarajapet for the Sree Rama Seva Mandali.

Ariyakudi

Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar is a hallowed name in Carnatic Music. It is to his credit that the present concert format (a varnam, one or two small krithis, a krithi with alapana and crisp swaras, a krithi after a detail alapana, niraval, swaras with a thani avarthanam, another short krithi in brisk speed, Ragam, Thanam and Pallavi mostly in Adi tala, 4 kalai, 3/4 eduppu - thrikala and thrisra, swaras, sometimes in ragamalika, virutham -sloka, pasuram, a devaranama, javali, thillana, and mangalam) is traced. There is also a complaint in a section of musicians that Ariyakudi diluted our music, flooding it with a number of items, thereby reducing the alapana and other manodharma aspects.

But generally, connoisseurs and musicians were of the view that Ariyakudi popularised our music by providing a rich variety in the repertoire. Essence of raga bhava was the criterion and repetitive portions of long presentations were avoided.

However, there is no doubt that Ariyakudi was a past master in rendering short kalpanaswaras and bring out the character of the raga with tight laya bhava as well. He was the unrivalled king of his pataanthara and whatever he sang was considered an authority to be followed by all. He was in very great demand during his days.

Ariyakudi was selected for the first President's Award (Sangeet Natak Akademy, Delhi) and Mali wrote in The Hindu questioning the norms. Most of the musicians were shocked at these 'antics' of Mali. I showed the paper to Chowdiah who was also taken aback and asked me to find out from Mali, what he meant.

I went to Mali and he clarified that Ariyakudi was singing several com-

positions of Mysore Vasudevachar and Acharya who was a highly venerated vocalist should not have been ignored and should have been given the award earlier. Chowdiah instantly responded joining issue with Mali. Vasudevachar was given the Award the next year.

Ariyakudi's repertoire was very rich and whatever a listener asked, he would respond immediately remembering the sahitya of so many krithis without looking at a slip. His ragamalika pallavi 'Shankara-bharanam Azhathodi Vaadi Kalyani- Darbarukku' with kalpanaswara in the respective ragas at the relevant Sahityakshara was a rage for sometime.

Whenever in Mysore State, he would invariably render 'Nambi Kettavarillavo' in thirsa thripata in detail with niraval, swaraprasthara of 'Garudagamane' with a layavinyasa of the percussionist. 'Kandu Kandu Nee Enna', 'Kaliyugadali' and a few devaranamas were always eagerly looked for. Ariyakudi - Chowdiah - Mani was a combination which would fetch handsome collection for sabhas. Ariyakudi's treatment would be precise and bring out the personality of the raga at any given point of time.

His swaras were soaked in raga bhava and he would at times resort to rhythmic calculations which would never spoil the beauty and grandeur of the ragas. The present practice of rendering 'thrikala' from the 'eduppu' is mostly attributed to Ariyakudi. Palghat Mani had the greatest of regards to Ariyakudi and wrote an article 'Ariyakudi Pechhullavarai Paduvar' (Ariyakudi would sing as long as he could speak) in a felicitation volume on the 75th birthday of Ariyakudi. Ariyakudi was a perfect public relations man and would keep acquaintance with all those he came in contact with.

I was married in 1964 at Mysore on a Friday. I had returned with my bride on Saturday. Malleswaram Sangeetha Sabha had organised Ariyakudi's concert on Sunday. That morning Ariyakudi surprised me and all the members of my family visiting the Jayanagar residence, of my sister with whom I was put up. When I plainly expressed my pleasant surprise at his visit, Ariyakudi interjected "You are coming whenever and wherever I sing. Should I not come to see



Palani Subramanya Pillai

you and your bride to bless you!" Words failed to express my feelings. That was Ariyakudi. His demise in 1967 created a big void that could not be filled up. It is strange that Chowdiah also passed away the same year-1967.

Palani Subbudu

Palani Subramanya Pillai was a great percussionist, his Mridangam had a unique style of his own. Palani school of mridangam play is by itself a pataanthara with special virtues and credits. Palani's 'gumkees' are proverbial and the operation of his right thumb on the 'thoppi' is something remarkable (Palani was a left hander).

His accompaniment to a gayaka or vadaka would be fully supportive without any hindrance. His solo turns

would bring out the eloquence of his laya srusti with intricate rhythm pattern coupled with the left and right coordination of the highest order. He would resort to laya vinyasas in the sophisticated 'Thiruppugazh' thalaas. He passed away very early at his 54th year in 1962. He deserved more honours than he had received.

His accompaniment with Lalgudi Jayaraman for an excellent veena recital of S. Balachander is unforgettable.

For that concert at the City Institute pendal for Sree Ramaseva Mandali, he asked for my mridangam. He opened up the left thoppi to suit his large palm to such an extent that I could not play in that thoppi again. He asked me to get a mridangam repairer and I took P. V. Parameshwaran who had just then started a concern of mridangam making and repairing. When he had applied the 'karanai' (black round spot on the right drum head), Palani was furious and went on to explain how it should be done. Parameshwaran learnt this unique technique and later turned out to be one of our best instrument manufacturer and repairer.

Two artistes who passed away in 1965 leaving indelible impressions on me are Alathur Subba Iyer and G.N. Balasubramanyam, called as Subbudu and GNB. Alathur brothers provided classical music of the highest order, it would not be incorrect if I assert that their music was my model. Whether it was alapana or a clean cut rendition of a krithi, Sahitya Vinyasa or Laya Vyavahara (kanakku in Tamil, lekkachara in Kannada) in swara or delineation of Pallavi, sukha bhava was of prime importance. 'Shantha-mulekha', 'Sri Raghu Varaprimeya', 'Koluvamragada' are some of the krithis that are still green in my mind. Surati, Natakuranji, Nayaki, Devagandhari, Mukhari are some of the ragas handled exquisitely. Their

Pallavi in 5/8 and 7/8 'eduppus' without loss of any raga bhava are exemplary. The rendition of 'Ninnuvinuga Mari' in viloma chapu set in Deshadi tala in the company of Lalgudi Jayaraman and Palghat Mani Iyer can never be forgotten.

In a concert at the Malleswaram Sangeetha Sabha, this was the major item and Mani Iyer played one of his best laya vinyasa for 15 minutes after a wonderful awe-inspiring 'koraippu'

for the charana 'Paramalobhulanu', with a 2/7 'eduppu', participated by three tier rendition of the brothers and Lalgudi with Mani Iyer right down to 1/8 avartha without a single miss or blot. Later the Pallavi, 'Thenparam Girivazhar Murugaguhane...' in Natakuranji, set to khanda tripata, 4 kalais with the take off after 5 counts was rendered in thrikala and thrishra, instead of allowing Lalgudi to play the thrikala, they asked Mani Iyer to play. He Rendered a lightning,

thunderlike short laya vinyasa. The Pallavi was converted into a single kalai with 1 1/4 eduppa and the sahitya was rendered in one avartha, 2, 3 and 4 avarthas and back. Subbudu demanded Lalgudi to play this. Lalgudi with his usual calm demeanour played it so perfectly that even Mani Iyer was prompted to say 'bhes!' Perhaps we cannot listen to or witness such pallavi expositions of Alathur - Lalgudi - Mani Iyer.

to be concluded

IN LIGHTER VEIN

At the End of it All !

Manu Vijay

There were many things that one looked forward to at the recently concluded Ms world pageant. There were those that wanted to see if the corporate house led by one of India's most proclaimed actors would fall flat on its face for its organisational abilities. Some wanted to see how any of his wives the Sultan of Bruenie.... brought to the extravaganza, would. Dr Rajkumar accept AB's invitation? Would Ruby Bhatia make a fool of herself?

After reading reams of news print about this much hyped event, few gave a thought to poor Ms World. She would be crowned of course-but that was incidental, KEB, anyway, put us out of our agony for a few hours we

missed the pageant altogether-but not the excitement prior to the show.

This brought to my mind some of the hype that precedes a Bharathanatyam Rangapravesha. While the student and family put in hours of agonizing effort, the event is almost anti climatic.

The frenzy of activity fizzles out as the final Tillana is over and only a few memories remain. The audience, of course, has a few hours of fun. We want to know the latest gossip in the field who's wearing what-which dancer is on an American tour, who has programmes in Chennai, which Guru pays the least to her/his musicians, which guests are invited etc.

Political influences, romantic liaisons, latest fads in costume, jewellery and stage decor, programme tour are discussed and dissected in detail. The poor dancer, is of course forgotten. If she's so-and-so's student XYZ's niece, or belonging to this family she has got to be so good or abilities bad. The dancer's abilities and diligence is quite lost in maze of speeches, guests, decor and gossip, and at the end of it all, leaves her feeling depleted and lost instead of the excitement of standing at the threshold of fulfilling career in the dance field. She has of course, the albums to look at and remember much like the Ms. World pageant faded into oblivion leaving a mangled cricket pitch at the KSCA Stadium.*

PHOENIX

wishes its readers, welwishers, sponsors and advertisers
a Happy & Prosperous
NEW YEAR

Focus on Music - Laya



Bzngalore K.Venkatram being honoured by Umayalapuram Sivaraman

The 28th Annual Music Conference of the 91 years old Bangalore Gayana Samaja, held at its auditorium from November 27, 96, was inaugurated by Ganapathi Sachidananda Swamiji of Avadhoota Datta Peeta, Mysore.

In his inaugural address the swamiji explained the significance of various swaras in music, its salutary effect and medical values. He stressed the need for encouragement and support to classical music.

N.Pattabhiraman, Editor of Shruti, a music monthly from Madras released two audio cassettes rendered by M.S. Sheela and observed that artists should restrict the number of compositions in a cassette and instead provide better scope for kalpana aspects like raga, nerval etc.

Veteran percussionist Bangalore K Venkatram, who was unanimously elected as the president of the conference in his scholarly address spoke on his close associations with the Sa-

maja and recalled his association with late V.T. Srinivasan, the founder president of the Samaja. He remembered his guru, Ghatam Manjunath and the support he got from the violin maestro T. Chowdiah. He observed that the number of compositions in the con-

certs has increased there by limiting the scope for improvised music. Lauding the highly evolved state of the art of contemporary musicians, Venkatram dwelt on the different roles of laya vadyas, as accompaniments and with individual personality.

Expressing his happiness at the systematic assessment by the AIR he appealed the Doordarshan to extend the timeslot for classical music similar to AIR.

Sathyanarayana Setty, Vice President proposed a vote of thanks. Earlier Padma Murthy rendered the invocation and H. Kamala Nath the welcome address.

Lecture Demonstration

In his lecture demonstration presented in the evening, Venkatram presented a two-tier Laya Vinyasa, 'Laya Vadya Vaividhya' presented several percussions used in recordings and light music like Dikki, Roso-rosa, Nagara, Poong, Tamarin,



N.Pattabhiraman, Editor, SRUTI releasing the cassettes of M.S.Sheela



Dr Rajaramanna honouring V. Krishnan

Damdi, Idakka, Khol, Ghata Singari, Tape, Marracos, Base Dolak etc. Most of these instruments were seen for the first time. Bali, Shivu and Kashyap rendered these instruments.

The second part was a laya vinyasa. The basic theme was a sloka on Saraswathi and the relevant Solkattu of Shahaji Maharaja. The sloka and solkattu were rendered in Misra Jampai. The 'Kuraippu' was planned to present groups of sruthi and other vadyas. The finale was build up with precision and clarity.

Academic Sessions

The academic sessions every day had renditions of krithis with reference to swara, tala and laya to suit the theme of the conference, 'Music-Laya'. S.K. Ramachandra Rao in his 'Music in Vedas' called for an extensive research on the aspect of evolution of tala and laya from the Vedas. He said that music

V. Doreswamy Iyengar, who formally inaugurated the academic sessions observed that the proceedings would help the students of music and connoisseurs to understand the intricacies of the art for better appreciation. Ramachandra Rao stated that music is undergoing changes over the years but of the six vegangaas the

'Sheeksha', dealing with the phoenetics, pronunciation and 'chanda' are noteworthy for recitation of vedas. He explained all aspects of vaidika and lowkika chandas.

Noted mridangam vidwan, Vellore Ramabhadran explained the 'sarva laghu' pattern of mridangam playing to the accompaniment of the vocal duet of R.K. Padmanabha and D.V. Nagarajan.

The second day's sessions saw T. Keshava Bhatt speaking on 'Tala and Laya' in Yakshagana. He traced the salient differences between the 'thenku

thittu and badagu thittu' and explained various talas in use. Explaining the two versions of the 'thrivide', the nidhana thrivude and thwarithas, the 'thithithai' taalals, Bhat observed that in sahitya and artha are predominant in Yakshagana as different from Sangeetha where Bhava and raga are dominant. Mridanga Vidwan A.V. Anand observed that the misra chapur and thrishra thriputa resembled the two varieties of thrivude of Yakshagana.

Noted academician and scholar of Mysore, R.Sathyarana in his lucid explanation on 'Tala chapters in ancient Sanscrit texts on music' observed that tala system of Indian music is unique. He referred to ancient texts in three stages. Natya shastra, Daltilam, Bruhaddeshi and Abhinava Guptas commentary and Bharata Bhashya formed the first part. Manosollasa, Sangita Choodamani, Sangeetha Sudhakara, Sangeetha Samaya Sara and Sangeetha Rathnakara formed the second part. He observed that there are 4000 slokas pertaining to talas only.

H.S. Anasuya Kulkarni demonstrated and explained select drums of Papua New Guinea and Uganda on the third day. Kundu, Gengang drums were played. Noted music and dance critic



Vidwan S.Shankar in concert



At the sadas of 28th Music Conference

B.V.K. Sastry explained the features of drums of Africa and traced the dhvani laya vaividhya of instruments and complimented the artiste on her lucid presentation.

Bangalore K Venkatram, the conference President explained the varying and vanishing tala traditions with illustrations. G.R. Jaya and V. Kalavathi lent vocal support. Disappearance of deshadi and madhyadi talas, conceptual differences between misra chapu and thrishra thripata talas, earlier and present versions of the operation of rupaka tala were demonstrated. Noted vainika, V. Doreswamy Iyengar, complimented Venkatram on his explanations with clear expression.

Versatile vocalist M.S. Sheela demonstrated pallavis as presented in earlier days and present. A pallavi in Mudrika tala, one of the Ashtothara talas, three speeds of pallavi rendition as per prevalent practice in Mysore style. Contemporary practice of thrikala and thrishra for four kalai - 3/4 eduppu pallavis, samples of pratiloma and sophisticated 5/8 and 7/8 eduppus were demonstrated. Venkatram narrated the details of several earlier pallavi exponents of yester years and available texts on pallavi.

The fourth day saw the noted art,

dance and music critic and the editor of Phoenix, S.N. Chandrasekhar spoke on all aspects of thattu-mettu-nattugaru thattu / mettu- thattu, mettu-jaru- mandi. Demonstrating various rechakas like Hastha, Kati etc he observed that Greeva rechaka is not in use these days. Students of Padmini Rao participated in the demonstration and Damodar Bhatt played the mridangam.

Shankaran gave a lucid demonstration of the Palani style of mridangam playing. Sankaran referred to the dexterity and artistry of the great Palani Subramanya Pillai, nadai - sorkal, subtle introduction of nadai-bhedas without loosing the aesthetics, prayogas of gumki were amply demonstrated. Sankaran referred to laya as the "Rate of Speed of events". He referred to the Thiruppugazh talas which his guru revealed. Sankaran spoke on his publication on the introduction of the notation system to preserve the patterns with an accent on "not-to-loose" the fingering techniques. Venkataram referred to the maintenance and upkeep of instruments by Palani and the aesthetics in the vyavahara of the Palani style.

The penultimate day had Kanaka Swamy rendering select krithis of Dikshithar, with a special reference to vibhakthi krithis. Venkataram ex-

plained the various krithis series of Dikshithar and referred to the publication (on Dikshithar) of the National book trust authored by T.L. Venkatarama Iyer, scholar-cum-musician.

Padma Gurudutt explained the Laya varieties in chandas, vachanas and ugabhogas, extensively describing the details of chandas of Kannada. She narrated the vachana and gayana concepts in vachanas and ugabhogas. Mysore V. Subramanya observed that laya delineation similar to Thiruppugazhs are not available in Kannada. He referred to the anibaddha narration of vachanas and ugabhogas in earlier times and the nibaddha narrations of the present day. Vocalist T.S. Satyavathi gave a raga darshana of Saveri, profusely illustrating points and explaining the different swaras with suitable narrations. She rendered "Rama Baana" to illustrate her observations. She referred to the work of K.S. Nagarjan whose collection involves 87 compositions in Saveri.

H. Kamalanath explained contribution of Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer, as part of the birth centenary celebrations on the concluding day of the experts' sessions. Profusely quoting from an article of B.V.K. Sastry published in Gayana Samrajya, K.S. Mahadevan (former editor of "Shanmukha") and Venkataram spoke on the artistry, personality and contribution of Vishwanatha Iyer.

A symposium on "Laya Vadyas in Karnataka Music" was interesting. Key-note address was presented by art critic K.S. Mahadevan, participants included A. Veerbhadraiah, T.N. Padmanabhan, T.S. Satyavathi, Anoor Ananthakrishna Sharma, Mysore Subramanya, V. Krishna, N.R. Ananthanarayana.

Expectations of participants were discussed. Senior accompanists, not accompanying versatile competent lady artistes, timings and duration of solo turns for percussion accompanists, problems faced by accompanists

were explained. Need for research and development instrumentation of laya vadyas, creation of exclusive compositions for percussion ensembles were highlighted.

Curtains of the festival came down on November 3, 96. Dr Raja Ramanna, eminent scientist and noted Piano artist presided over the function. Mridangam mastreo Umayala puram K. Shivaraman conferred the title "Sangeetha Kala Rathna" on Bangalore K. Venkataram. Sivaraman in his address referred to Venkataram as the son of a post master and a past-master of percussion art; he lauded the services and contribution of Venkataram to the field of music and especially to percussive art.

Young Artistes Hold Sway

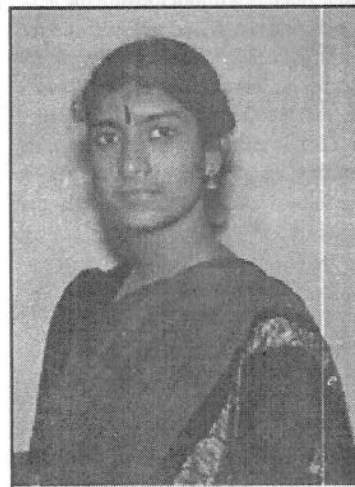
Local talent had every every reason to be happy with the conference. Besides a host of young, competent accompanists, the week long fare featured three vocalists from its ranks.

Names like Nagamani Srinath, R.A. Ramamani and S. Shankar are reputed among the present generation of musicians as their counterparts elsewhere like U. Srinivas (mandolin), Rajkumar Bharati, E. Gayatri (veena), the Hyderabad Sisters, Lalitha-Haripriya and Sikkil sisters, Neela-Kunjumani. It goes to their credit that the former acquitted themselves as impressively as the others.

Much has been written about these artistes in recent times and their performance in the conference was in

keeping with their reputation. But there was something more to it in the conference and that is the emergence of names in the youth wing. Assessment of their fare in the afternoon session is worthwhile, as many of them are sure to hit headlines in the years to come.

The afternoon sessions featured some noteworthy talent of the younger generation of musicians, the concert part of the eight day conference got underway with an impressive 'laya vinyasa' by the percussion artistes of the Ayyanar College of Music under the direction of ghatam Vidwan



A. Vasudha

Artistes of the year R. Seetharam, C. Krishna Murthy, S. Chandrashekar, A.V. Anand, H. Narasimha Murthy (Master Hirannaiah), T.N. Padmanabhan and E.P. Alamelu were felicitated, V. Parthasarathy, Managing Director of State Bank of Mysore, distributed the prizes to the winners of the music competitions and junior concerts.

Raja Ramanna enlised the services of Venkataram and complimented him for popularising percussive arts and artistes. Master Hirannaiah in his highly humorous address, thanked the Samaja on behalf of the artistes felicitated. ■

Photos: Phani Raj

Bangalore K. Venkataram, the conference president.

There was a full array of rhythmic instruments, the ensemble revealing the one solid element that lifts a 'laya vinyasa' to a height-intensity. A collective effort where each artiste displayed his mastery over the technique.

On the concert side, M.S. Vidya's vocal stood out for its scholarship. Her varnam (Hindola), a composition of her father, the late M. Seshagiri Achar, gave her a lilting start. Though her voice was not in fettle, her Kalyani raga-thana-pallavi for a complex chatushra-jhampe, khanda nadai, showed her as a complete singer. The flute recital of A.P. Sarvotham was equally impressive. His alap for Shankarabharana (Enduku Peddala) was neat, revealing a steady blowing. But it has yet to acquire resonance.

Hamsini Nagendra as she intoned Simhendramadhyama (Dayaleni) appeared in a hurry if not over confident. Her Kambodi (raga, tana, pallavi) was more convincing both in its lyrical essence and rhythmic elegance.

Pushpa Kashinath in her veena shows remarkable felicity as evidenced in the varna (Jaganmohini). Her interpretation of Kapi (Mee valla) was as impressive for its modal fidelity. All she seems to need is a greater sense of involvement. But her technique is sure, Dharmavati and Thodi revealing lilting lines.

The popular duo Roopa and Deepa Rao has made a name in the light music genre. Their alap is (Bilahari and Vachaspati) neat, but the phrasings are short of colour and flourish.

But even as S. Vasudha of Mysore started the Saranga varnam, one could discern class. Her Sriranjini (Bhuvanidasudani) and the lovely pallavi in Shankarabharanam reaffirmed a mastery in the style that is associated with a generation of musicians that, alas, is fast dying out.

Overall it was a reassuring series.

.S.N. Chandrasekhar

Rajeev Tharanth

THE RESTLESS GENIUS

Krishna

"I had not seen a sarod being played till I was 19, What I did hear of the pre-Ali Akbar sarod turned me away from that sound. I was an adoring fan of Pandit Ravishankar who was a frequent visitor to Bangalore, in the 50's. A performance of his at the Town Hall was advertised.

Later it was mentioned that a sarod player called Ustad Ali Akbar Khan was coming too. I was sad. I decided to concentrate on the sitar.

The evening came and the concert began with raag Puriyakalyan. Chaturlal waited behind the Table. In a very short while, this strange balding Buddha on the sarod, draped over his exotic instrument, just took off, soared and explored the depths of the dark silences and burst into volcanic fury - metaphors fail me. I was a changed man. My world was emptied of everything except that man and that sound."

This is Pandit Rajeev Taranath one of the Rajyotsava awardees this year and one of the foremost sarod players in India today, narrating his first encounter with Ustad Ali Akbar Khan. Recently, this Bangalore-based maestro was invited as a Visiting Professor of Indian Music by the prestigious CALARTS, California Institute of Performing Arts, USA, an institution established by the famous Walt Disney Foundation. After Pandit Ravi Shankar, he is the only other Indian to be honoured with such an invitation.

Talking to this restless genius is always fascinating. There were a few

crucial questions to ask of him about his formative years, music, his recent visit to CALARTS, et al.

Q] Being the son of Pandit Taranath, who must have been a Renaissance role-model to you, imbibing a vivid idealism and a passion for excellence must have been very natural and important. What made you give up the promise of a brilliant academic career and go off into music ?

A] I started learning music from my father, the late Pandit Taranath, a man with a remarkable versatility of achievement and range of interests. A thinker, reformer, doctor, educationist, writer, mystic, musician, what have you !

At the beginning of this century, he was to Karnataka what Tagore was to Bengal. I was around four years, when he started me on the tabla. At around six, he taught me vocal music. When I was short of seven he put me to learn under a series of good musicians, who stayed in our house from time to time. Prominent among them were Venkat Rao Ramdurgkar, the senior most disciple of Sawai Gandharva of the Kirana Gharana; and Shankar Rao Joshi of the Gwalior Gharana.

I was considered a prodigy and made to give concerts which I didn't like. I liked the resulting adulation of adult admirers though. They gave me tanpuras and tabalas for presents.

My voice braking was quite a psychological crisis for me. I began

my broadcasting career as a singer in fact. I was successful, but bored and gave up. Meanwhile, I studied English literature and stood first in the University. But, more than that I was a successful debater and orator for my institutions. Active person in what might be called intellectual pursuits.

I expected and many expected that I would take a shot at the Civil Services or Foreign Services or go into pure academics. That I did not. I went off to do music.

This happened sometime in 1955, when Rajeevji was 22. He stayed with the Ustad in Bombay and then in Calcutta for six years. Reminiscing, Rajeevji says with deepest reverence that today behind all his music is the rich resonance of Baba (Ustad Ali Akbar Khan). He has been among the greatest during his learning years. Those who taught, gave him precise guidance (infact it was Pandit Ravi Shankar who urged him back to music as a career, when personal problems pushed him into English teaching and kept him there for long) and supportive care - Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Pandit Ravi Shankar, Annapurna Devi, and Pandit Nikhil Banerjee. Rajeevji feels privileged "to create and perform in the aura of their blessings".

Today Rajeevji is one of the finest exponents of the ancient 'Senia' school of Hindustani music, which originated from the immortal Mia Tansen and has nourished in this century, the greats like Ustad Allaaddin Khan and his children Ustad Ali Akbar Khan

and Annapurna Devi and disciples Pandit Ravi Shankar Pandit Nikhil Banerjee, and Pandit Pannalal Ghosh. He has travelled extensively and been acclaimed by serious music lovers the world over.

He is the first Indian to have played at the famous Sydney Opera House in Australia. A frequent visitor to the US and Europe, he has taken the richness of Indian music to Hungary, Egypt, Eden. A music critic at New York reviews rhapsodically "Rajeev Taranath's sarod improvisation mixes the spiritual and the spirited" and calls his music, "an exuberant rhythmic celebration". He is responding to Rajeevji's music which comes thro' as a constant dialectic between deep classical rigour and an irrepressible emotional intensity.

The careful intellect which chooses, experiments with and juxtaposes tones and textures of sound can also storm into grand passion or relax in lovely lyricism.

Rajeevji has worked with a plurality of medium like films, writing, English teaching. A brilliant thinker, he is one of the few musicians who can talk intensely and interestingly about politics, society and culture. His music for the first new wave film in Kannada 'Samskara' set a trend in music direction for serious cinema in the South. 'Pallavi' and 'Sringeramasa' and Malayalam films like Aravindan's 'Kanchana Seeta' followed. 'Pokkuvayil' was an unusual experiment where the narrative of the film was set to the logic and sequence of its music! Vasudevan Nair's 'Kadavu' more recently, to

name a few, have all won him admiration and awards.

Music drew him away from writing. But he was at the centre of the modern Kannada literary movement at one time. The few but brilliant pieces of writing during his years as an English Professor, have found international recognition.



Teaching seems to be at the centre of his being. As a Ford Foundation Scholar he has researched on the "teaching techniques of Maihar-Allauddin Gharana". As a teacher who has taught Indian classical music in India and across cultures, he talks about the validity of the art of teaching.

Q] Is music for all or is it more a matter of genes and genius?

A] I don't think we should be talking much too facetiously about genes. What do the genes carry? Do they carry music, if so at what level of delicacy? Hindustani music? Sarod music? An ability to play Chandranandan? But certainly intelligent practice, intelligent learning and imaginative teaching --- all presided over by a durable seriousness, should

lead a student somewhere, someplace good, where he starts deriving satisfaction and becomes aesthetically locomotive.

Q] Tell us about the ambience of CALARTS and the very interesting if ambitious concept of 'World Music' that the institute has evolved.

A] There are very excellent conservatives teaching classical music, classical dance, like ballet in many U.S. cities. But CALARTS is the only institute, where a range of Western Music --- classical, traditional jazz, modern, post modern, computer music, opera singing --- everything taught side by side with other Music and Arts, in which also high level training is available, all the non-western musics, are gathered under World Music. There is a constant

attempt thro' the year to bring together the Western and non-western music in structures, where they interface, interact and fuse. True, the results could be quite scattered or spacy sometimes. But always there is that opening available for that special, sudden epiphanic combination.

Then, I have suggested some changes in the structuring of the world music. Some of the people who go to the States from underdeveloped countries also want to secure their places thereby making world music programmes sift options, the fear at the background being that the presence of difficult learning items might reduce the number of students opting for the programme! Too many purveyors of things Indian abroad sit back in the new found cosiness and talk tirelessly

about peace, spirituality, Nadabrahma and all the other 'mentionables' associated with this subcontinent.

This is very wrong because they themselves have learnt competence in processes difficult and demanding in the 'extreme' --- And I was trying to say that if one level of competence was aimed at in Western music teaching was necessary. The students accepted some of my abrasiveness quite well. (Soon they got hooked on to the excitement) honing their skills. One student actually accompanied me during the end of the semester concern!

Q] Students, who register for this programme what are they looking for and where does the whole thing lead them?

A] Learn! If they do very well to get across the ethnic barrier, people of the Mother culture will accept them even if they offer slightly uninspired stuff my sort of allowing it --- with phrases like "For a foreigner he is doing very well :)" But to be accepted and respected independent of biodata, race or culture, then one is required to achieve a very high standard indeed. It is possible. It is just a beginning. What I and the students there are aiming at is to make them competent performers not complete musicians, not so much the raagas but useful techniques which when internalised, the imagination will create and create within the challenging tightness of the classical raaga. I look forward to pushing them a little further during the next three months of my second visit.

Students wrote letters to the President carrying a lot of admiration for my somewhat driving kind of teaching. The authorities requested me to stayback at CALARTS permanently. But as a performer, I could not settle down there. So I have accepted to be a permanent Visiting Professor there, that is I teach at the institute whenever I am in the U.S.

Rajeevji left for the U.S. in September this year for yet another session

at CALARTS. It is time indeed that we Indians felt a proper pride in the achievements of this fine musician.

Music Competition

Music Competition was organised by Bangalore Gayana Samaja. The competition was tough and the quality good.

Judges had a tough time in choosing the winners. Following are the winners at the annual conference of the Samaja:

Juniors' Concert

Sumitra Nitin, R.A.Dakshina Murthy, A.P.Srinivas, Madhura S.Kumar, K. Prashanth, K. Srinivas, B.C. Manjunath, S. Prashanth, Jyothsna Manjunath, V. Ganesh, N. Amruth, B.N. Sathyanarayana Murali, Pushpa Raju and K. Jayashree.

Juniors' Competition

V.V. Rukmini, C.N. Vasudha Prahlad, R. Shruthi, M.R. Srinidhi, S. Ashok, R. Madhu Kashyap, Shree Krishna, B.J. Bharath, C.Kiran, C.N.Viswanath, Amith A.Nadig, Priya Sheshadri, P. Nanditha, T. Karthik Ashwin, Karna B. Athreya, B. Divya, S. Lakshmi, S. Datta, A. Shiva Kumar, A. Shashank, R. Kavyashree, M. Bharath, R.T. Vidya, B.G. Jayanth, Swetha Keshav, N. Sumana, Shree Krupa, K.S. Swetha, G.Sriranjani, Aruna Ranganathan, K.T.Udaya Kiran, T. Pramod Kumar, N.R. Deepashree and B.K. Raghu.

Senior's Competition

Chitra Srikrishna, B. Sreerama Bhatt, K.Bhargavi, Manasi Prasad, M.S. Shilpa, R.Suchethan, B.S. Anand, P.Srinivasa Prassana, Matangi Rajasekhar, M.S. Gayathri, S.K. Raghavendra, Vamshi Raghu, R. Arvind, Ranjani Siddanthi, Geetha R. Bhatt and S. Karthik.

Nupura's Calender of Events

December 19 : Bharathanatyam by students of Nupura at the National Pathology Conference, Indian Institute of Science.

December 23 : Bharathanatyam Ranga-pravesha of Mridul Rajashekhar at Ravindra Kalakshethra - 6.30 p.m.

December 26 : Bharathanatyam by student of Nupura at the Dakshina Bharatha Sahithya Sammelan, Karkala.

Sri Ganasudha Sangeetha Sabha Bhadravathi

Silver Jubilee Year Music Festival

December 25 : M.S.Vidya (vocal), R. Raghuram (violin), A.V.Anand (mridangam) and L.Bhimachar (morching).

December 26 : V.Ananth (flute), J.K. Sridhar (violin), A.V.Anand (mridangam) and L.Bhimachar (morching).

December 27 : Basavanagudi Nataraj and N. Sunitha (violin duet), Nagendra Udupa (mridangam) and Giridhar Udupa (ghata).

December 28 : R.K. Padmanabha and D.V. Nagarajan (vocal), R. Dayakar (violin), N.G. Ravi (mridangam) and Omkar (ghata).

PHOENIX
reaches you by post
every month
with no extra cost

Nadaanta Falls in Line



Artistes themselves organising festivals of music and dance seem to have become the order of the day. Whatever the mode of the artiste, the fashion is to present a composite fare of the twin arts.

In recent times, the performing arena has seen regular performers like Pratibha Prahalad, Padmini Ravi, Purnima Ashok, the Kirans, Vyjayanti Kashi Salauddin Pasha, Nirupama-



rajendra, all dancers and Suma Sudheendra, Vasantha Madhavi, musicians, have all formed institutions of their own to promote not only their own chosen art form, but also throw open opportunities to fellow-artistes pursuing their allied arts to share the platform. Most of these artistes organise annual festivals which make way for exposure in both music and dance.

The latest to join the group is the Nadaanta Academy of Music and Dance. The brain behind this Academy is the couple T.V.Ramaprasad and Indira Kadambi, the husband an upcoming vocalist and the wife a seasoned Bharathanatyam dancer. Hence, it is only natural that their festivals cover both dance and music.

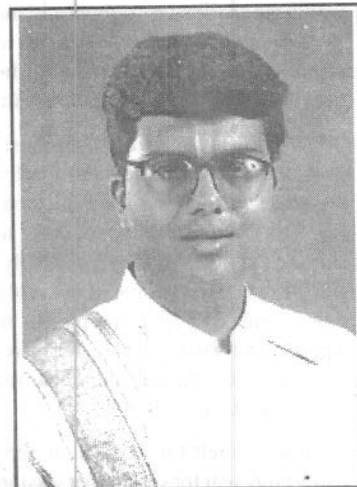
The Academy's festival last month was in a similar direction. But there was one difference and that is the absence of a recital by Indira herself, of course for entirely personal reasons. And that vacancy in dance was filled by the Kirans - Sandhya and Subramanyam.

Doing away with the routine rep-

ertoire of Bharathanatyam, the senior students of Padmini Ravi presented a feature entitled "Bhavya Rama Katha. As the title indicates, the idea was to draw on the mythological and spectacular appeals in the familiar saga of Rama.

But as the elucidation unfolded with the almost shop-soiled Swati Tirunal piece "Bhavayami Raghuramam" (ragamalika), one could not help suspecting about its sustaining character. To the relief of the discerning, the choreography turned out to be so taut and so imaginative, the couple changing roles with alacrity to maintain a steady tempo, that the impact was nearly total. One must add that the meaningful rendition of the familiar lines by Neela Ramanujam added to the punch and sparkle of the fare.

The popular Vidyabushana Teertha Swamiji was one of the attractions in the musical segment of the three-day festival. Though his forte is the devotionals comprising the celebrated 'Hari dasa padas', the Swamiji is no novice as a classical singer. His alap for Saveri (Bhubharamati) and



Pantuvrali (Aparama Bhakti) at once revealed a ringing flourish, though the form derived sustenance only from the kritis.

The devotionals in Kharaharapriya, Mohana and Amritavarshini were certainly more evocative, drawing repeated applause from the crowded house. B.U.Ganesh Prasad (violin), Ananthasubramaniam (mridangam) and Ranganath Chakravarti (ghatam) lent the Swamiji excellent support.

The other Carnatic vocalist featured in the festival was Ramaprasad himself. His concert, however, was preceded by a short function to felicitate two distinguished artistes, the nonagenarian vocalist Thitte Krishna Iyengar of Mysore and Abhinaya exponent Kalanidhi Narayanan of Madras. A soulful Nagaswaram recital by the husband and wife duo S.P.Palanivel and Prabhadevi. Right from the customary salutation to Ganapati (Hamsadhvani), the duo revealed a varied repertoire, Dharmavati (Bhajanaseya) and Charukeshi (Adamodigalade) receiving an elaborate treatment. The confident way they went about developing the alapana and elucidated the kritis with sprightly Swaraprasthara, spoke for their astute performing skills. It was a lively fare.

As Ramaprasad intoned with a composition of Lalgudi Jayaraman in Mohana-Kalyani, it became evident that the youngster was in fine fettle. After reeling of ditties in Amritavahini (Sri Ramapadama) and Ahiri (Mayamma) in style, Prasad took up Kambodi (O Rangashayee) for a detailed alap. Though his voice in the upper reaches was a trifle unsure, the rendition of the stately Thyagaraja kriti was not short of its lyrical appeal, some sparkling 'sangatis' heightening its sensitivity. But in the 'swara' forays, the rendition could not conceal shades of Shankarabharana straying in. Also, as in Mohana-Kalyani earlier, the 'korvais' extended beyond their sustaining limits.

Veteran Umayalapuram Shivaraman who provided mridangam support was the cynosure among the accompanists, V.V.Ravi (violin) and T.V.Vasan (ghatam) completing the team. Right through the 90-minute fare, Shivaraman rollicked with his lively layakari, the 'Thani' for the Kambodi Adi tala piece reaching a crescendo to the delectation of the avid listeners. But Ravi certainly found himself in a low key.

The lone Hindustani artiste in the fare was Parameshwar Hegde, a senior disciple of Basavaraj Rajguru. In rollicking form, the sensitive vocalist opened with a leisurely alap for Maru-Behag. With lingering meends and resonant tonality, he explored the depths of the melody, decorative 'sargams' investing its overtones. Audav Bageshri that followed was harnessed to as sprightly a mood, Parameshwar enriching the portrayal with a wide array of bol-taans in the Antara.

It was pleasant listening, a Bhajan "Janama Janamaki Das" lending a lilt to it. Seasoned Ravindra Yavagal on the tabala and Vyasamirthy Katti on the harmonium complemented the vocalist's aesthetic sensitivities.

Chandrasekhar

Naadanta

Naadanta Academy of Dance and Music was founded in 1989, by T.V. Ramaprasad and Indira Kadambi, to impart education in music and dance. A Trust was formed in 1995 with the objective of expanding the activities of the Academy from teaching to propagating music and dance and organising festivals. The Academy is organising work shops by eminent teachers in the field of music and dance for the benefit of the artiste in Karnataka. It plans to propagate music and dance through production of audio

cassettes, compact discs and video cassettes and distributing them world over. The Academy which had conducted 'Arohana' and 'Parampara' festivals in 1995, is conducting classes at Rajajinagar, Vijayanagar and J.P.Nagar.

T.V. Ramprasad

T.V. Ramprasad is a young vocalist from Karnataka who is making rapid strides in the field of Carnatic Music. T.V. Ramprasad was trained under illustrious teachers like R.R.Keshavamurthy, T.V. Gopalkrishnan and S.Rajam. Blessed with a melodious voice, T.V. Ramprasad has evolved his own unique style of singing, mixing both a lively approach and involvement, to heighten the mood of the listeners. T.V. Ramprasad is a regular AIR and Doordarshan and has performed in major organisations in the country. T.V. Ramprasad has toured the United Kingdom for concerts and workshops. T.V. Ramprasad is anchoring a programme of Carnatic music 'Saptha Swara' on Udaya T.V.

Indira Kadambi

Indira Kadambi is a reputed Bharatanatyam danceuse of Karnataka. She has had the privilege of training under outstanding gurus, Usha Datar, Narmada and Kalanidhi Narayan. Precision of line and movement, combined with grace and fluidity could be seen in her performances. Her 'Abinaya' is subtle and suggestive and has been widely acclaimed. She has undergone training in Mohiniattam under Kalyanikuttiamma. Indira's dance recitals have taken her to many parts of India and abroad. She has performed at the Sri Krishna Gana Sabha, the Vasanta Habba, Nishagandhi festival, South Central Zone Cultural Centre's festivals and performances in different places in Europe. Indira is an empanelled artiste of the Indian Coun-

cil for Cultural Relations (ICCR), New Delhi. Indira finds time from her busy performance schedule to train youngsters, at Nrityagram, where taught Bharatanatyam for three years, and at the academy.

Indira is a good Nattuvanar, too, having received advanced training under Kamala Rani of Kalakshetra, Madras. Indira is well versed in the allied arts of music and literature.

proud to enjoy the confidence of more than 1.20 lakh depositors, spread over 65 branches in 10 states. It plans to increase its net work of branches to 70 by the end of the financial year 1995-96. The company has been paying an uninterrupted dividend for 52 years and has declared a dividend of 30% for the year ended 31st March 1995. The company has had 4 Bonus Issues and 7 Rights Issues in the past. The company's shares are listed on the Stock exchanges of Bombay, Pune, Bangalore and Mangalore.

Maha Rashtra Apex Corporation Ltd

The festival Maha Rashtra Apex PARAMPARA was sponsored by Maha Rashtra Apex Corporation, a leading financial services company. The Company is a member of the reputed Manipal Group. Established in 1943, and headed by T. Ramesh.U.Pai, Chairman is ably assisted by Sri

T.Sudhakar Pai, Managing Director, his eldest son.

The company has diversified activities like Hire Purchase, Leasing, Deposits, Bill Discounting and Money Changing. The Deposits of the company has crossed the Rs.1900 million. The Company is

Kurl-on Ltd., makers of the well-known 'Kurl-on' brand of coir mattresses and pillows, is another reputed member of the Manipal Group.

Taking Financial Services
to the Common man's doors
Since 1943

DEPOSITS CROSS
Rs. 1900
MILLION



Maha Rashtra Apex

ESTD 1943 Corpn Ltd. Regd. Office: Syndicate House, MANIPAL - 576 119.

Hire-purchase ♦ Leasing ♦ Deposits ♦ Bill Discounting ♦ Money Changing

S-501/502, Manipal Centre, 47, Dickenson Road, BANGALORE-560 042. Ph: 5596067, 5588001.

No. 45, Geetha Colony 2nd Floor, 29th Cross, 4th Block, JAYANAGAR, BANGALORE-560 011. Ph:642009, 6641452

No. 75, G. Koil Street, Puruswalkam, MADRAS-600 084. Ph: 6420252, 6422593

27, Dowlani Towers, Dr. radhakrishna.Salai, MYLAPORE, MADRAS-600 004 Ph: 8235068, 8233915



Raga Vishleshana - Hindola



Ratnamma Keshavamurthy, Bangalore Venkatram, G.R. Jaya and Uma Gopalaswamy at Raga Vishlesana Programme

In the "Raga Vishleshana" series organised by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bangalore Vidushi Rathnamma Keshavamurthy of Shimoga gave a vintage vocal recital commencing with a Varna "Ninnenammi-yunnanura". She attributed the piece to Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar. Though the name occurs it is not so. She rendered "Padmanabha Pahi" of Swati Tirunal and "Samagana Lolane" of Sivan and rounded off with a Vachana. Basavangudi G. Nataraj and N. Amruth provided the violin and mridangam support.

Earlier, the raga vishleshana was conducted by Bangalore K. Venkataram assisted by Uma Gopalaswamy and G.R. Jaya (vocal) and G. Nataraj (violin). Venkataram explained that there is no raga by name Hindola in Hindustani music; Hindol and Hindoli do not resemble Hindola. Hindustani raga Malkauns does.

Hindola is an Oudava Vakra Sanchara upanga raga; rishabha and panchama varjya. Sadharana gandhara, shudha madhyama, shudha daivatha and kaishiki nishadha are the assigned swaras. There is a pataanthara for the krithi, "Manasuloni Marmamu"

of Thyagaraja rendered with chatusruthi daivatha. S m g m d n s - S n d m g s are prescribed texts (Sangraha Choodamani of Govindacharya, Sangeetha Swaramruthi in Telugu, Sangeetha Kalanidhi of Tachur Singrachar, Gayaka Siddhanjanam of Tachur Brothers, Karunamrutha Sagara of Abraham Pandith, Sangeetha Chandrike of Salem Manicka Mudaliar and Veena Seshanna). Mahabharatha Choodamani prescribes "S g m d n s - S n d m g s" extensively used in contemporary concert music. 'S m g m' in Arohana is the Vakra Sanchara.

There are 12 ragas commencing with Hindola like Hindola Darbar, Hindola Saranga, Hindola Vasantha without any semblance of Hindola. As per the text book of the Department of Education, Mysore Government in 1973 prescribed for proficiency examinations authored by Thitte Krishna Iyengar, this is a janya of 8th Mela Hanuma Thodi.

A sloka describing the swaras of Hindola was rendered by Uma Gopalaswamy. Shantha - Deena - Karuna rasas noticed while Jaru and kampiltha gamakas are used in vilamba

kala was exhibited by singing "Neerajakshi Kamakshi". Veera-Adbhutha rasas noticed while Vareku Janti and Daatu swara gamaka prayogas in Duritha Kala were exhibited by singing "Sujana manoratha poorana chature" by G.R. Jaya.

Compositions known in Hindola were explained. Lakshana Geetha (Sangraha Choodamani) was rendered by Rathnamma Keshavamurthy. A geetha of Venkatamukhi in Jhampe. Varnas, "Swami ninne kori" in adi was rendered by G.R. Jaya and "Rammanave" of Ramaswamy Dikshithar on Thyagaraja in Ata by Uma Gopalaswamy. Another Varna was "Ninne Nammiyunnenura". Krithis are Samajavaragamana and Manasuloni of Thyagaraja, Neerajakshi Kamakshi and Govardhana Gireesham of Dikshithar, Padmanabha Pahi of Swati Tirunal, Bhajare Gopalam of Sadashiva Brahmendra, Mamawatha Sri of Vasudevachar, Chintayami of Jyachamaraja Wadiyar, Karundaya of Vedanayakam Pillai, Samaganalolam of Sivan etc.

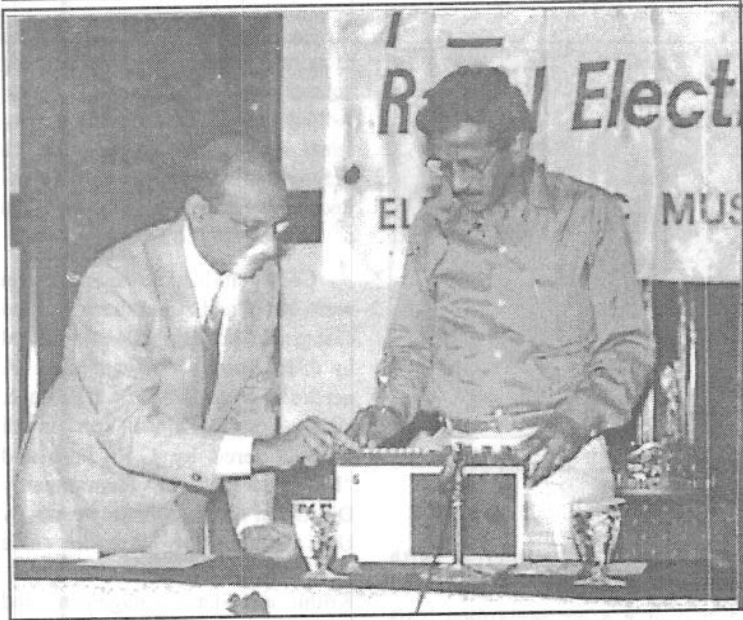
Sruthi Bhedha of academic interest was explained. Jaya rendered Shudha Saveri shifting tonic note from Gandhara while Uma rendered Udaya Ravicharika with shift tonic note from Madhyama. Natarajan (violin) played the scales of Mohana and Madhyamavathi by shifting tonic notes from Daivatha and Nishadha respectively.

Devagiri Sangeetha Sabha

Jan 4, 97: T.N. Seshagopalan (vocal), Mysore Nagaraj (violin) and Praveen (mridangam).

January 11, 97, 6 pm: S.Nithyashree Mahadevan and party (vocal).

RADEL's Tala Mala LT -15



Y.K.Muddukrishna, Director of Kannada and Culture releasing the Tala mala LT-15

Taalamala LT 15, an electronic tabla for light music was released by Y.K. Muddukrishna, Director of Kannada and Culture, on November 9, 96 at Bangalore by switching on the unit.

Muddukrishna described it as a wonderful development and an unique contribution to the field of music particularly the light music.

He was happy that "such a genius is amongst us". and the State Government identified the talent of Raj Narayan, the inventor of the system by conferring the 'Rajyotsava Award' this year.

Muddukrishna felt that the Talamela would be very useful for school and college students while teaching light music and wished Raj Narayan succeeded in innovating more such instruments.

Eminent scientist and former Union Minister, Raja Ramanna noted

that the instruments are reaching maturity and said that the whole world is using modern technology in music, though the development has not reached that stage.

Light music exponent, C. Ashwath hoped that Raj Narayan would produce a compact electronic harmonium, easy to carry and wished for the success of his projects.

Noted Hindustani musician, Vinayak Torvi, said that Radel Electronics has contributed a lot to the cause of music and in the process he has created a guru in the Talamela LT15.

Earlier, Raj Narayan, Director of Radel Electronics (P) Ltd, who introduced the Talamela LT15, claimed that the function was a blend of tradition, culture and technology.

Briefing on the establishment he said that the unit was set up near Bangalore with an investment of Rs

50 lakh with the assistance of Karnataka State Finance Corporation. All the equipments produced are indigenously designed and implemented. He said renowned artistes heralded as a breakthrough and informed that he has plans to bring out new products.

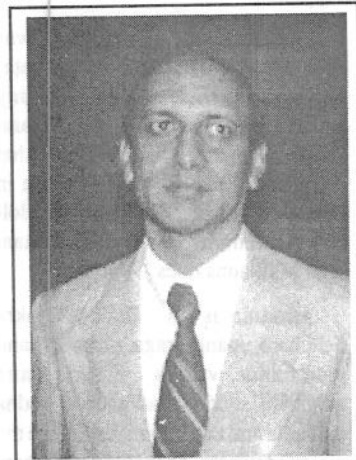
Later Malavika Raj Narayan, Bhamini Seshadri, Soumya and Dev sang with the help of the Talmela LT 15.

Radel Electronic Pvt Ltd is known for its innovative electronic musical instruments for Indian classical music. They are:

Electronic Tabla

G. Rajnarayanan has blended them into a movable maestro - the electronic tabla. Known as Taalmala, which produces the actual sound of the tabala is ideal for use during practice sessions.

The Taalmala produces the theka (rhythmic sounds of the table) for the various commonly used Hindustani taals such as ek taal, teen taal, jhap taal, rupak, dadra, deepchandi, keherva, ada cahutal, jhoomra etc. It is simple to use, having controls for



G. Raja Narayan

volume, pitch (sruthi), speed and a balance control for relative volumes of the left hand (bayan) and right hand (dayan) sounds. Selection of various taals are made through a calculator-type keyboard which also has 'start' and 'stop' keys. Various laya ranges, such as dhruti vilambit and ati vilambit can also be set to obtain any desired speed range. Within any of these ranges, the speed is continuously adjustable through a knob. The instrument automatically inserts additional bols (sounds) for true-to-life accompaniment.

The instrument is compact and portable. It can operate on AC mains (220 V or 110 V) as well as batteries. It is designed around a Z80 microprocessor. Bols are represented by numerical codes which are deciphered by the microprocessor. The whole process of producing the bols in a cyclic rhythmic manner is pre-programmed into the memory. A 2K ROM (with provision to be extended to 4K) is provided.

Tabla goes Electronic with Taalmala

The electronics age has entered the citadel of Hindustani music with the advent of Taalmala, the electronic table. The ingenious instrument was presented for a critical appraisal before an audience of musicians, music students and music critics by its inventor Mr Rajanarain of Bangalore.

His lecture-demonstrations have drawn a bigger audience than live performances.

Rajanarayan, who devised the two instruments has achieved something worthy of a government research unit. And his Bangalore-based Radel Systems is manufacturing and marketing these electronic classics.

Radel Electronics Pvt. Ltd is known for its innovative electronic musical instruments for Indian Classical music, electronic tambura 'Saarang', the electronic sruthi box

'Dhruva', electronic tabala 'Taalmala', electronic lehera 'Sunadamala' and the 'Talameter', an electronic taala aid.

G. Rajanarayan, one of the founders of the company, is the inventor of these revolutionary products, which are unique for their technological features and have been invented by an electronics engineer who is also a performing musician. Rajanarayan is an accomplished flautist, A-grade artiste of AIR and has performed on Doordarshan too.

Most artistes of Carnatic and Hindustani classical music use this instrument. After launching the 'Sunadamala' electronic lehera (an electronic instrument that plays 150 preset tunes in 19 different taala of Hindustani music), Pandit Ravi Shankar said, "Perhaps you will soon have my concert with just a photograph of me and your electronic instrument performing!"

Glorious Hampi Festival

A three day cultural festival 'Utsav 96' was organised at Hampi, the cultural capital of the erstwhile Vijayanagar Empire, from November 3, 96 by the State Government in association with the Government of India.

Chief Minister, J.H. Patel, the chief guest, was accorded the *poorna kumbhaswagatha*. He inaugurated the festival by offering pooja to Goddess Bhuvane-shwari.

The inaugural concert was by Gangubai Hangal, noted Hindustani vocalist. Kunkum Mohanti and troupe presented an Odissi dance ballet.

Kuchipudi exponent, Manju Bhargavi presented a Kuchipudi dance ballet. Suma Sudhindra of Bangalore presented a Pancha Veena concert. A

dance ballet, Sri Virupaksha, was presented by Suma Vijay.

Kadri Gopalnath gave a memorable Saxophone concert and Sangeetha Katti a Hindustani vocal. Punya Theertha Bharat, was presented by Yuvak Biradari from Bombay.

Lakshmi Gopaldaswamy of Bangalore presented a Bharatanatyam recital to be followed by Talavadya, by H.P. Ramachar's Kamataka Mahila Layamadhuri.

Ministers M.P. Prakash, H.D. Revanna and Leeladevi R. Prasad actively participated in the festival which ended on November 5 with a colourful procession of folk artistes and display of fire works.

Workshop: An Enlightening Experience

A 15-day workshop conducted by Guru C. Radhakrishna and organised by the State Sangeetha Nruthya Academy along with the South Central Cultural Zone to propagate the style of Guru Kolar Kittanna imparted to 20 interested students was rewarding. Some novel items not usually performed, including the Poorva Ranga, the Thaaya, the Prabhandha and the Swara Pallavi were the highlight.

The workshop culminated in a performance at the Bangalore Gayana Samaj where the students presented the items learnt at the workshop. Senior disciples of Guru Radhakrishna. Veena Sridhar, and Roopa Vijay presented a few other numbers creditably. The most interesting piece was the Navarasa presented by Veena Sridhar.

Guru Radhakrishna in his nattuvingam was supported by Chandrashekhar on the vocal and K.C. Ashwathanaraya on the flute.

Manu Vijay

Tuneful Encounters - 10

From Concert Hall to the Cricket Field

S.N.Sivaswamy

Come cricket season, my mind goes back to the early forties, All India Radio, Madras where I was working with colleagues many of whom shared my love for cricket. We used to cluster round a short - wave radio receiver listening to the inimitable A.F.S. Talyarkhan's one-man running commentary on the Quadrangular, later Pentangular cricket matches played at Bombay. (Of course, there was no T.V. as yet). We were a group of programmers, engineers and announcers, one of whom, V.S.Chakrapani, turned out to be an ace cricket commentator in later years.

And there was also a musician sitting with us, the young versatile S.Balachander the budding Veena maestro. Balachander was a few years younger than me, in fact a teenager. He was working in All India Radio as an instrumentalist when I joined there as a Programme Assistant. He was one of the child prodigies of those days, coming from a musical family. He was proficient in playing a number of musical instruments of various types. Besides the Veena, he played on Dilruba, Sitar, Tabla and many other instruments. He was the first artiste I knew who played "Tabla Tarang" the percussion ensemble with a difference. Indeed, his versatility amazed me as did the versatility of Mali, Balamurali, Rajeswara Rao, the other well known boy wonders of the musical world of that time.

Apart from music, Balachander was interested in a variety of other pursuits, books, sports, films ---. He had acted in a film, tailor made for

him, as the young Rishyashringar. The name of the film too was 'Rishyashringar' and I remember the sweet singing of the boy-hero in that film. Later, he was to himself direct an unusually intriguing film "Andanaal".

I often used to argue with Balachander that he should concentrate only on Veena instead of playing on too many instruments. In those days the great Karaikkudi Sambasiva Iyer was a regular performer on All India Radio, and listening to him, I had the feeling that Balachander was either influenced by him or had learnt Veena from him at some time or the other. My suggestion to Balachander was made in this light, but it appeared to displease him. He usually brushed it aside with the remark that I was hardly qualified to speak on instrumental music and did not know what I was talking about. Eventually I stopped annoying him with my comments, but by then we had stopped having any conversation on music, or any artistic matter at that.

One Saturday evening, however, I saw Balachander approaching my upstairs flat in Gopalapuram. It was the first time he was coming to our house and my wife and I were naturally surprised as well as pleased by this unexpected visit. I thought his visit must have something to do with our strained friendship quite unnecessarily fomented by my indiscreet comments. I waited for Balachander to break the ice and come to the subject so that we could shake hands and forget the affair.

As it happened, what had brought him to our house was not our quarrel which he seemed to have completely forgotten. You see, he had a cricket match to play that Sunday and he had come to borrow from me a pair of laundered white trousers for the occasion!

Along with the pair of pants I also gave him a piece of elderly advice, not to field in the slips and risk hurting his valuable fingers trying to catch hot chances from the batsmen.

MURALI MUSIC MUSICAL



SOLE DISTRIBUTORS
OF
CD DHRUVA & SARANG
OF RADEL'S FOR KERALA
& KARNATAKA REGION

Dealers in Quality Musical Instruments
- Expert Repairs & Prompt Service
Shri Kumaran Building, Opp Panagal Park
T. Nagar, Chennai - 600017 Ph: 4345105 Resi: 4991284

12/96

Gangubai Opens Music School



Gangubai Hangal who inaugurated the Ranganayaki Kalamandir seen with Jayalakshmi Inamdar, Pandit Seshadri Gavai and Surendra Dani

The art of Gamaka has its own lyrical appeal, projecting as it does the intricate texture of poetry. There is music in it, the composition being such that the ragas exemplify the lyrical essence. However, it is free from the rigid, stultifying mathematical conventions of Taala. That doesn't mean there is no laya. It is very much there and that is where its nearness to classical music is obvious.

Hence while it is not necessary that all Gamakis should be musicians, it is eminently desirable that all musicians are Gamakis! That will enhance the lyrical base of their rendition. Of course, there are quite a few who are competent in both the dispensations.

One such is Jayalakshmi Inamdar of Hubli. Though afflicted with polio early in life, the indefatigable artiste in her got the better of it by invigorating her creative faculties in making headway in the twin arts of Gamaka and music. Today she is one of the front-line artistes in the genre, qualifying herself as one recognised both in Gamaka and music circles.

Jayalakshmi inherited her interest in these arts from her father, Chikkappa

Shreshti. He had an abiding interest in music, literature and philosophy. This cultural backdrop invigorated Jayalakshmi's inherent talent. She consolidated it by learning veena under G.V.Ranganayakamma and vocal under Srinivasa Iyengar, both veterans in their respective arts. She received her training in Gamaka from N.Aswathanarayana, poet Devarsa Kulkarni having been her mentor in philosophy.

Equipped thus, Jayalakshmi's recitals in music and gamaka are marked for their lyricism and meaningful articulation of underlying words and ideas. No wonder reputed organisations like the Karnataka Gamaka Kala Parishat, Dharwad District Gamaka Kala Parishat, Manjajya Heggade Centenary Celebrations Committee, Kumaravyasa Seva Sangha, Hubli, Chitradurga District Gamaka Sammelana have felicitated her on her contribution to the art. The latest is the annual award (1995) of the State Sangeeta-Nruthya Academy.

Jayalakshmi, at the instance of her friends and admirers, has now shifted over to Bangalore. Her school of art,

named Ranganayaki Kalamandira at 'Devatashree' Jain Temple Street, Visveswarapuram was inaugurated by Dr.Gangubai Hangal, the noted Hindustani Vocalist in the presence of dignitaries like Chandrabhaga Devi, Chairman, State Sangeet Nritya Academy, Pandit Seshadri Gavai and Surendra Dani, a senior journalist of Hubli..

Jayalakshmi explained that in order to facilitate all sections of society to learn the art of music and gamaka, the fee is kept at the minimum. Besides vocal in both the Hindustani and Carnatic styles, arrangements are made to impart training in a variety of instruments like the violin, veena, sitar, flute and harmonium. Mridangam and tabla are also taught by competent teachers and the training covers from the primary to the graduate level.■

Wedding Bells

Mysore V Subramanya, great grandson of Veene Seshanna and the Secretary of Karnataka Ganakala Parishat married **Savithri** on November 17, 96 at Mysore.

Many close friends attended the wedding. PHOENIX wishes the couple a long and happy married life.

Subscribe to
PHOENIX

Know Your Artistes

A.P.Rao

**T.S.Vasantha
Madhavi**

Traditional vocalist, T.S.Vasantha Madhavi is a disciple of Ganakalanidhi D. Subbaramaiah.

Born in the family of musicians, her father, Srinivasa Murthy was a great lover of music and mother Rangalakshmi is a renowned vocalist. Her grand mother, Subbalakshmi was also a vocalist.

She started learning music from an early age of five and continued for more than 15 years and passed Vidwat examination with distinction.

As a performer and a staunch follower of tradition she has achieved authenticity in rendering musical compositions. Her concerts are notable for due stress on the usage of gamaka and rendering raga with full of bhava and varieties of rare sanchara. She has her own style of alapana, neraval and taana singing.

Vasantha Madhavi is a graded artiste of AIR and is performing all over the country for over three decades. She is an approved composer in AIR, Bangalore and has directed many AIR and TV programmes.

'Lakshmi Vandana', 'Shakti Sthuthi', 'Cauveri' and 'Ganesha Janana', are some of the popular programmes produced by her for Doordarshan. She has directed and composed music for a number of 'Navasuma' songs for AIR Bangalore.

Several varnas and navasandhi krithis have been composed by her for Bharatanatyam concerts. A set of Navagraha kritis composed by her in Sanskrit are being presented by many musicians. Her Ashta Deepika kritis exhibit scholarly knowledge and insight of Sanskrit vedic version.

Vasantha Madhavi has conducted several workshops on Saint Thyagaraja, Muthuswamy Dikshithar and Kamalamba Navavarna kritis. She has presented several papers on various music subjects and has conducted lecture demonstration programmes.

She has written a number of articles on interesting aspects of music for music magazines.

Vasantha Madhavi has given concerts in Bangalore Gayana Samaja, Karnataka Gana kala Parishat and Vivek Cultural Centre, Madras.

She is the founder and managing trustee of Sri D Subbaramaiah Fine Arts Trust which is doing yeomen service to the cause of music. As the principal of Rangasree college of music, Vasantha Madhavi is training many promising students.

Vasantha Madhavi, who is a graduate in Science from Bangalore University, is married to H.M. Keshava Murthy, an Electronics Engineer and has a daughter, Srivardhini, an upcoming vocal artiste.

T.S. Vasantha Madhavi
75 'Pallavi' /th cross, ITI Layout,
J.P.Nagar, 1 Phase, Bangalore
5 0078 ☎ 6646089

**H.K. Nagaraja**

Young Hindustani vocalist, Hanumanthappa Kadaramand Algi Nagaraja was born in 1966 in a family of music connoisseurs. He learnt initially from S.L.Venugopal, a staff artiste of AIR. Later he had advanced training from renowned maestro Pandit Basavaraj Rajguru for seven years. After the death of Rajguru, Nagaraja is being guided by Chandrashekar Puranikmath and M.Venkatesh Kumar.

A degree holder in English History and master's degree in music of Karnataka University, Dharwar, Nagaraj is the recipient of Karnatak Sangeetha Nrithya Academy's scholarship for three years. He is a 'B' high grade vocal artiste of AIR Dharwar.

Nagaraj has participated and won prizes in a number of music competitions to name a few are: First prize in All India P&T Cultural meet, Hyderabad, Second prize for 'gazzal' at All India College Youth Cultural Festival, Panaji; represented Karnatak University in South Zone Youth Festival, Madurai Kamaraj University; won prizes in 6th Yuva Sangeetha Nrithya Mahotsava organised by South Central Zone Cultural Centre, Nagpur

and a first prize in Thamankur Memorial Music Competition, Academy of performing Arts Hubli.

Nagaraj has developed a fine melodious style of singing. His creative mood and clear vision of sound musical knowledge have given him considerable recognition among upcoming artistes. He is of late giving concerts all over the country. His concert at the annual music festival 'Parampara' in memory of Pandit Basavaraj Rajguru in August this year attracted appreciation from music lovers of Bangalore.

Nagaraj is a part time music lecturer in a college at Dharwar.

*H.K.Nagaraj
C/o. K.J.Shah, 12, Navodaya
Nagar, 15th Cross,
Dharwar 580008*

Uma Gopaldaswamy



Till recently, doctorates in music and other fine arts were mostly honoris causa or gratia. With the introduction of music and dance in the university curriculum, more and more graduates in the faculty have started qualifying for a degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The Bangalore University itself has among its alumnus quite a few doctorates in music.

The latest addition to that distinguished list is Uma Gopaldaswamy, a leading Carnatic vocalist both on and off the AIR, where she is graded 'A'.

Gifted with a pleasant voice, Uma is a senior student of the renowned vocalist and preceptor R.K.Srikantan. Even in her collegiate studies she had taken music for her optionals, eventually taking her Master's degree in music. Uma has given concerts for almost all the leading music organisations all over the State and in Madras. The Madras Music Academy has given its award as 'The best demonstrator' in one of its annual conferences.

Uma's subject for the doctoral thesis was "A Study of SANGEETA SAMPRADAYA PRADARSHINI, an ancient treatise on the subject. Her guide was Dr.Padma Murthy, Professor of Music (Rtd)., Department of Performing Arts, Bangalore University.

R.Dayakar



Violinist R.Dayakar (35) was initiated to music by his parents D. Ramu and Shankaraleelamma. He had intitial training under H.T. Puttaswamachar and later with K.J. Venkateshachar of Mysore. Violin vidwan H.K. Narasimha Murthy, staff

artiste of AIR, provided him the advance training.

Narasimha Murthy helped Dayakar to establish as an accomplished accompanist.

Dayakar has won several awards during his college days in international University competitions and festivals. He has accompanied many veteran musicians of repute in all the leading sabhas of the country.

He was conferred with the title "Surmani" from Sursingar cultural organisation of Bombay. He toured Switzerland on invitation from Keshava Sangeetha Nrithya Academy.

He has good skill as a accompaniment artoste. He is an accomplished artiste with good fingering technique

Dayakar is the A-grade artiste and a staff artiste of AIR, Bhadravathi.

Subscribe to PHOENIX

Journal on Music and Dance

It reaches you by
post every month

Subscription
Annual:
Rs 50-00
Three Years :
Rs 140-00

Send your cheque to
Circulation Manager
PHOENIX

138, 5th Cross
Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009

Yakshagana in New Garb



The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Bangalore Centre celebrated the 95th birthday of the renowned Kannada litterateur, Dr K. Shivarama Karanth with a week-long festival of his version of Yakshagana 'Prasangas'.

Though the folk theatre which has flourished in the coastal Karnataka for centuries is nothing new to the City theatre-goer, it was for the first time that a whole gamut of his creations with the new look was being presented here. That by itself was an event to rave about.

The presence of that multi-faceted personality on the concluding day of the festival, added colour and gaiety to the celebrations. The occasion was doubly significant as the Bhavan took the opportunity to felicitate the creative genius. Besides his latest book entitled "Matina Sethuve", a publication of the Bhavan was released on the occasion.

The book is a translation of letters in English exchanged between Mahatma Gandhi and his benevolent

industrialist friend G.D. Birla and the members of his family. The book under its English title, "Bridge of Words" had impressed Karanth so much that he wanted to translate it into Kannada. The Bhavan readily agreed to publish it and it was in the fitness of things that Sarladevi Birla, daughter-in-law of Ghanshamdas, personally released the work which is undoubtedly a valuable addition to Gandhian literature in Kannada.

Besides these two eminent personalities, C. Subramaniam, the President of the Bhavan, S. Ramakrishnan, its energetic Executive Director, and B.K. Birla, the illustrious son of the famed industrialist, graced the occasion. E.S. Venkataramiah, retired Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India, who is the chairman of the local Kendra, presided over the colourful function.

During the week beginning October 1, as many as seven Prasangas were enacted by the artistes of Karanth's Yakshagana Kendra of

Udupi. As is the wont, mythology and spectacle inexorably held sway on the audience in the packed Kincha Auditorium day after day.

Even as the curtains went up on the opening production, Nala-Damayanti, it was evident that the age-old style is shorn of many of its crudities in almost all the departments of production.

Firstly, the music ensemble which usually occupied the centre stage, the Bhagavata verily playing the role of a conductor, is shifted to the wings as in a classical dance recital. The screeching voice of the singers is mellowed down to render the diction clear and coherent. The musical spectrum is widened to include a wider variety of ragas, the tonality in each case articulating the emotional demands in the sequence.

The inclusion of a violin and saxophone enhanced the melodic overtones of the score, obviously directed by the seasoned violinist A.V. Krishnamachar (Padmacharan) who himself dominates the orchestral effects on the violin.

The emphasis on the clarity in the rendition becomes imperative in the absence of the dialogue that usually helped identifying each character. True, often the players would indulge in extempore dialogue on matters of contemporary relevance. Relevant as the form was used as a medium of mass communication. It is these references that excited the rural populace which sat through the night to witness the plays, similar to the "Theru Koothu" of Tamilnadu, "Veedhi Natakam" of Andhra, "Nautanki" of West Bengal and "Tamasha" of Maharashtra. Whatever, the rural folk

and the traditionists have not taken kindly to the change.

On the positive side, the new form assumes a sophistication which approximates with the ballet. But the Nritta part of the dance movement is retained with all its variegated 'angikas', 'utplavanas', 'bhramaris' and suggestive footwork in tact. The costuming is equally suggestive and as rich and colourful as in the original form to the point of portraying Rama,

Lakshmana and Sita under banishment in all regalia !

Some of these innovations have resulted in reasonably reducing the play time, mostly not exceeding 120 minutes. That is a factor which makes the form eminently acceptable to the urban elite. What is more, it has widened its popular appeal, a factor which cannot be ignored by the most ardent votary of the traditional !

Chander

Rewarding Experience

A ten day music workshop on Dasara Padagalu was conducted by R.K. Srikantan at the Lalitha Kala Academy, Vidya Vardhaka Sangha, Bangalore from November 1, 96.

T.S. Satyavathi, a senior disciple of Srikantan made a fervent appeal to the participants to make good use of the opportunity of learning the renowned master. She praised Srikantan for his scholarship and learning with full of concern for his well being.

'It is not just learning a few songs but a way of life which the students would do well to imbibe from the venerable master', she said and compared his knowledge of music to the ocean.

40 young and old men and women participated in this workshop. Manuscript notation written by Srikantan in his clear, neat hand was given to participants.

Nine compositions by different Dasaas were taught. Padams of Purandara Dasa, Kanaka Dasa, Vyasaraaya and Srēepadaraja in raagas of exquisite beauty like Mayamaalavagoula, Anandabhyravi,

Begada, Sree, Bhyravi, Mohana, Bilahari, Udayaravichandrika and Surati were were taught.

Nine Dasara padas are nine gems, each a work of art set in a raga eminently suited to the bhava of the sahitya. The essence of the raaga is brought out unmistakable in the very first few lines of the pada.

Srikantan explained the context and meaning of the words and phrases. He clarified as to why certain lines or passages should be sung only in a particular way for best results. Words, context and the mood set the pace and the style of the song.

The ragas are chosen with particuoar care keeping in mind the chandas of the pada. The pada can make an impact only if it is sung in the authentic raga in the correct kala pramana. The words of the padas are colloquial expressions of daily use. But the wisdom and philosophy of life contained in them can reach the hear of the listener only if they are sung in the way they should be sung. ■

Kusuma Rao

State Artistes make a mark in Kuchipudi Fete

Nehru Kendra and the Kuchipudi Kala Kendra had jointly organised a national festival of Kuchipudi in Mumbai recently.

The three day ustav starting on October 11 covered almost all facets of the art from solo to ballet and included a seminar on music for Kuchipudi, lecture cum demonstration on all the topics.

The demonstration covered all the classical dance forms that originated in Andhra Pradesh: Kuchipudi, Yakshagana, Andhra Natyam, Melattur Bhagavata Mela, Vilasini Natyam etc. For the benefit of participating artistes critics from parts of the country took part in a seminar.

The two artistes who represented Karnataka were Manju Bhargavi, who along with Rattaiah Sharma of Kuchipudi village presented a masterly 'Bhama Kalapam' in the demonstration sessions and Vyjayanthi Kashi who presented a solo. The latter presented 'Urvashi Shapa Vimochanam' and 'Kukutha Sabdam', both new pieces. They were acclaimed almost the highlight of the festival.

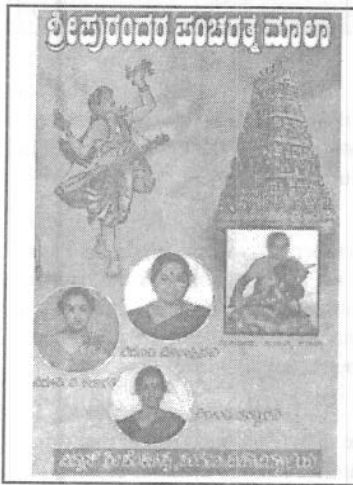
Mahadevan Passes Away

Morching vidwan, Pudukkottai Mahadevan died on October 23. Mahadevan who was an auto parts dealer was running a hotel at Tiruchirapalli.

Recipient the title, Kalaimamani from the Government of Tamilnadu, he is survived by his wife, two daughters and one son.

Purandhara Pancha Ratna

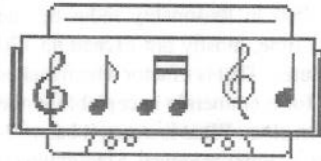
Mala: Produced and distributed by Vidwan B. Venkatappa Sangeeta Mahavidyalaya, 1 Cr, Satyanarayanaipet, Bellary 583 103. Rs 30/-.



There can hardly be any musician or music-lover worth the name who is not familiar with the Pancha Ratna Kritis of Saint Thyagaraja. They are unparalleled in their musical perception. But here is a similar set of kritis entitled 'Sri Purandhara Pancha Ratna Mala'. The label itself is intriguing as no such kritis are attributed to the Dasavarenya. That is irrefutable. Equally undeniable is the fact that the five Kannada lyrics rendered in this cassette are his own. Only the musical structure is different, adopting as it does the pattern familiarised by Thyagaraja. And that is the creation of almost an obscure musician, Subhadramma Venkatappa, a violin vidwan of the Vidwan B Venkatappa Sangeetha Maha Vidyalaya, Bellary.

As one listens to the five compositions, preceded by the Saint's masterly Sri Gananatha in Malahari, one can only marvel at the genius of this unpretentious musician. The choice of the kritis is such that each blends itself to the structural demands of a 'pancha ratna'. The rendition, rightly in the form of a chorus, led by V. Kalavati with Meenakshi Ravi and Dhanya Ravi, is as impressive. B. Raghuram (violin) and N.G. Ravi

Cassette



Causerie

(mridangam) have complemented the vocal refrain adequately. But the title card falls short in its artistic perspectives.

Palinchi Kamakshi: (Carnatic Vocal) by M.S. Sheela. Hamsadhwani Audio, 5, 3rd Cross, 1 Main, Maruthi Extension, Bangalore 560021. Rs 38/



The standing of M.S. Sheela in Carnatic music today is indisputable. She is well-known both in the classical and light classical variations. Already many of her cassettes in both the dispensations have become hot favourites with music buffs. Her rendition of the erstwhile world of 'slokas' propitiating the entire pantheon of Indian god-heads have run into more than one edition.

Here is one more cassette of hers under the new banner Hamsadhani Audio. It is a choice collection of compositions, each of a reputed mas-

ter. Starting with the familiar Shahana vernam of Veena Kuppier (Karunimpa), it runs in the popular concert pattern with ditties in Bilahari, Jayamanohari, Purvi Kalyani, Madhyamavati, a Devaranama in Sindhu Bhairavi and a Thillana (Hameer Kalyani).

The title has its relevance as the focus is on the alap for Madhyamavati preceding the celebrated shyama Sastry kriti. With relevant stasis on Madhyam and Nishad, the portrayal of the piece grows into a proportional representation with chiselled 'sangatis' and a heat 'swara koravai'.

The other kritis in the selection are as evocative, an experienced team of accompanists of Nalina Mohan (violin), Anoor Ananthakrishna Sharma (mridangam) and Ravi Kumar (ghatam) adding to their aural enrichment.

Haridasa Namana (Dasara Padas) A Compendium Volume Offered by Hamsadheani Audio. Rs 33.

Here again, Sheela in her millifluous voice renders some well-known and some less-known compositions of the saint-singers of Karnataka. The musical score in each case underscores the modal fervour of the composition. In all there are eight songs, four of Purandhara Dasa, Vyasaraaya and one each of Vadiraja and Vijayadasa. An ideal way of paying homage to the hallowed saint-composers.



Dk's Dance Comes Alive

Seeing some young dancers of South Kanara and its environs dance in the Akhila Karnataka Nritya Sammelana organised by the Karnataka Nrityakala Parishath at Udupi in the last week of October, it became evident that the much-vaunted cry in some quarters to "take fine arts to the rural areas" was purely politically motivated.

The pick in the three-day fare, spread over six sessions was Aparna Samaga, student of Mohan Kumar Ullal. From the initial pushpanjali itself she was able to carry conviction. The jatiswaram (ragamalika) continued her grasp of the grammar, all the attractive aspects of the art getting the due emphasis.

The familiar Natakuranji Varnam revealed a glimpse of her abhinaya which was much above average. There was a studied approach in the use of hasthas and facials. That was indeed talent that deserves to be watched.

Equally impressive was the group dance choreographed by Chandra-sekhar Navada for the invocatory. The young girls revealed liveliness unusual in beginners. Bramara, who demonstrated for her Guru K.B. Madhava Rao was equally sprightly, revealing neat lines and trite thattu - mettu.

But Navada's another student, Shobha Bhat seemed to be carried away by a superficial delight. Lakshmi Gururaj, student of Sandhya Rae was no better, though her sense of rhythm was sharp.

Preeti Pai of Shimoga, a student of Geeta Datar, had shown promise in her Arangetram some time ago. But her matrix in this outing revealed too much on visually attractive elements and lost credibility. The whole thing lacked depth.

The climax in the festival reached as Lakshmi Gopaldaswamy danced. The pretty dancer, her mother Uma singing the words and Guru Narmada

wielding the cymbals, was in her elements, executing the bill with utmost confidence and understanding. The Thodi Varnam (Maye Mayan of T.N.Krishnan) stood out for its well wrought nritta, though the overly bhakti sentiment saw her facials all though in a supplicating mood. But the popular Krishna Nee Begane brought her potential in the right perspective to the delectation of an appreciative audience.

The Parishath this year had selected Maya Rao for the prestigious "Nrityakala Shiromani" award. Maya is a worthy choice, as she is not only the best student of Sohan Lal who brought Kathak to Bangalore way back in 1939, but has revived it with her Natya Institute of Kathak and Choreography.

Among the other eminent personalities honoured on the occasion was M.S. Natarajan, a pioneer in organising orchestral music for dance. As secretary of the State Sangeetha Nritya Academy in the sixties, he was instrumental in not only recognising many traditional activities, but organising inter-state cultural exchange programmes. He had also provided musical support to several international dancers of his day. SNC



M.S.Natarajan being honored at the festival



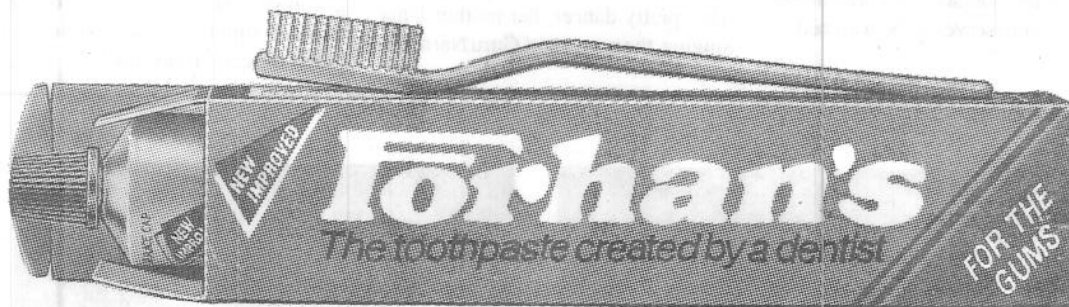
Maya Rao being honored at the festival

ABSOLUTE DENTAL FACT

Bad breath has more to do with
the health of your gums than your teeth.

ABSOLUTE FACT

Only Forhan's has an exclusive astringent
that tightens gums
and keeps them healthy
to prevent bad breath.



Proper dental care begins with **Forhan's**

INDIAN PHOTOGRAPHY & CINEMATOGRAPHY

STEPS INTO IT'S

17th Year

of Uninterrupted publication.

It is read by over 40,000 readers
all over the country who
understand the products you offer

Advertise in

**Indian Photography
& Cinematography**

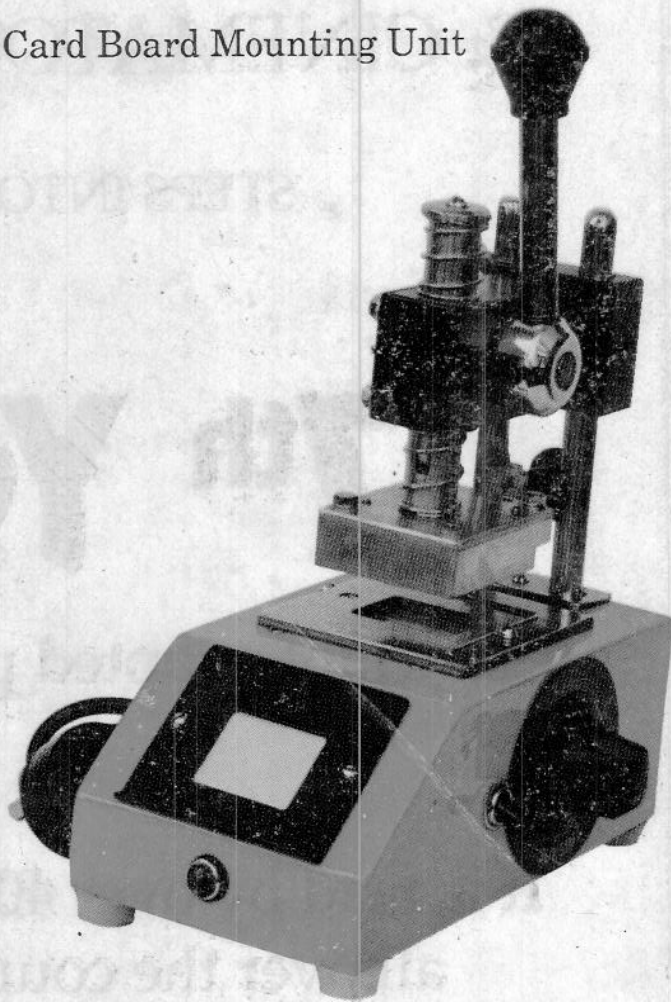
138 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009 © 2263696

No More Buckling while Mounting Transparencies

SUPERA SEAL 101

Professional Card Board Mounting Unit

- Heavy Duty
- Thermostat Controlled
- Illumination for Viewing
- Sleek Streamlined Construction
- Attractive Colours to Decorate Modern Lab System



Designed and created by

FOTO Image

138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009 ☎ 2263696

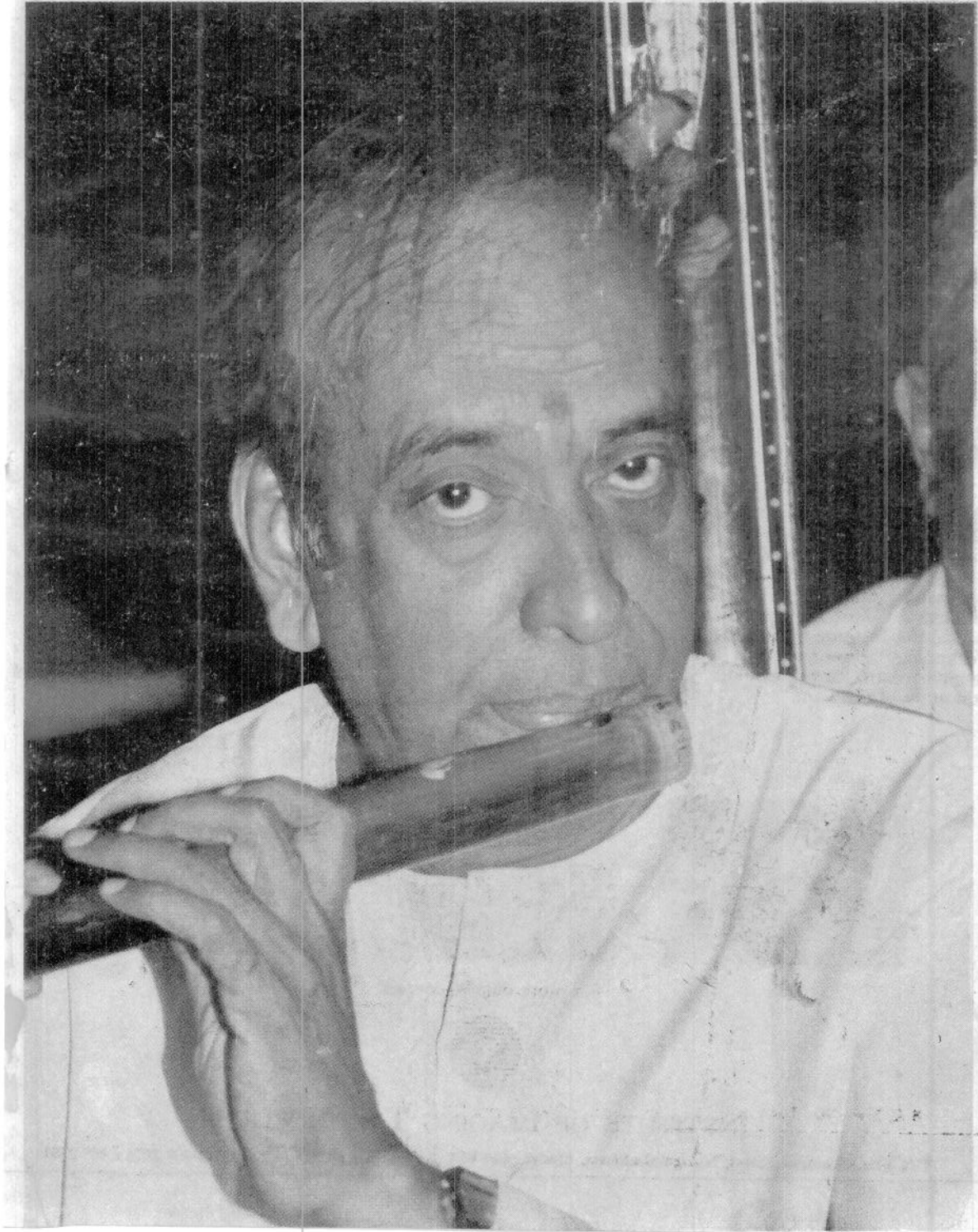
Dealers: **BANGALORE:** Photo Speed Co, Brigade Road, Bangalore 560001 ☎ 5580505: R.K.Photo Guide, 5th Mai, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009: **NEW DELHI:** Sangam Electronics, M-11 Palika Bazar, Connaught Place, New Delhi 110001 ☎ 332 2090: **HYDERABAD:** Jitens, B-37 MCH Market, Chikkadapally, Hyderabad 500002 ☎ 040-7633043

Phoenix

January 97

JOURNAL ON MUSIC & DANCE

Rs 5-00



INTRODUCING A NEW DIMENSION TO IMAGING TECHNOLOGY

..... A Professional Course in Photography,
Photo Finishing and Photo Lab Management

The continuously growing demand for skilled mini-lab technicians and Lab Managers will soon be fulfilled.

The Institute of Imaging Technology introduces a short term professional course to impart intensive training in the various aspects of Photography, Photo finishing and Photo Lab Management.

The brainchild of Nippon Group, who have rich experience in marketing Konica products in India and successfully operating a chain of Konica Color Labs in the South, the Institute of Imaging Technology is promoted as a premier centre for professional education of this sort.



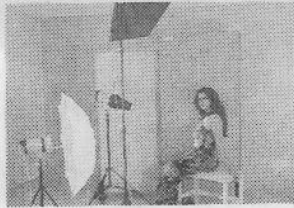
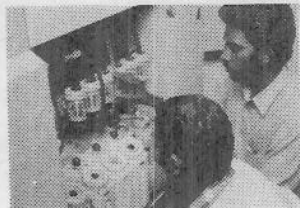
Housed in a spacious, air-conditioned facility, and equipped with a Studio and Library, this is the first of its kind in India, providing a great opportunity to learn the nuances of the art.

The 3 - week course is designed to create scientifically trained technicians and management personnel.

The syllabus covers

- Intensive theory on Photography, Photo Finishing and Lab Management
- Hands-on training using the latest Konica Nice Print system - and
- Demonstration through sophisticated training and evaluation aids

**Enrol today, Rise to become
an entrepreneur on your own merit!**

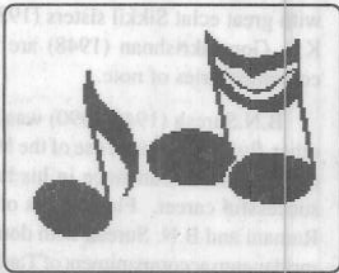


For more details, contact



INSTITUTE OF IMAGING TECHNOLOGY

8 A, Bragathambal Street, Nungambakkam, Madras-600 034 Telephone : 8233656 Fax : 044-499 1071 / 499 2351



PHOENIX

Journal on Music and Dance

Vol 2

January 1997

No

Contents

4	In Mali's Footsteps
5	Editorial-AIR's Priorities
6	Calling AIR
9	Purandhara Namana in USA
10	Down Memory Lane
12	Dancing All the Way
14	Music Between Two Rivers
15	Skilful Homage to a Maestro
16	Dancers Captivate European Viewers
17	News in Pix
18	Obituary

S.N.Chandrasekhar
67 Basappa Layout
Bangalore 560019 © 6675758
Editor

Bangalore K Venkatram
183, 8th Cross, II Bl, Jayanagar
Bangalore 560011 © 6630079
Associate Editor

N.Sundarraaj
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009 © 2263696
Managing Editor

B. Rajashekar
© 2216459
Advertising Manager

A.P.Rao
741, 7th Cross, III Block
Koramangala, Bangalore 560034
© 5532658

Representatives

Geeta Raja
9 Chhaya, Jam-e-Jamshed Road
Matunga, Bombay 400019
© 412 2074

Annual Subscription: Rs 50-00
Three Years: Rs 140-00

Please send all remittances to
PHOENIX

The Circulation Manager
138, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar
Bangalore 560009 © 2263696

(Cheques to be drawn on
'PHOENIX')
RN 45468/87

Cover Photo
DR N. RAMANI
by N.Sundarraaj

Published by N.Janardhan and printed at Enjay Printers, 5th Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore 560009 Composed at
IPC Grafics, Bangalore 560009 Phone 2263696

Cover Story

In the FOOTSTEPS of MALI

Bangalore K Venkataram



N.Ramani (R) with Dindigal Natarajan

Noted flute artiste N.Ramani (born 1934) was the recipient of the coveted "Sangeetha Kalanidhi" honour of the Madras Music Academy for the year. This is an occasion to reminisce on the development of Flute as a solo concert instrument and the contribution of some of the artistes who revelled in the flautine art.

Flute is said to be the first instrument called Venu with its origin as a simple Bamboo piece in the field of instrumental music. Venu and Veena were used as accompaniments to vocal artistes. It was in use for support in orchestration for dances and group recitals.

It was Sarabha Sastry (1870-1904), a blind flutist who passed away in his 32nd year who gave the instrument an independent status as a solo major instrument.

Palladam Sanjeevi Rao (1882-

1962) was a highly successful concert artiste who put the flute at the concert platform. He was the first flutist to be honoured with the "Sangeetha Kalanidhi" in 1943. Tiruppambaram Swaminatha Pillai (1898-1961) next got this honour in 1953. T. Viswantham (1926) was the third in the line 1988.

It was the flute wizard T.R. Mahalingam (1926-1986), popularly known as Mali who brought about a metamorphosis of the flautine art. By adopting the cross-fingering techniques, Mali was able to bring out all the gamakas, thereto unheard of and intoned all the microtones. The "sukha raga bhava" in any sophisticated gamaka could be brought out by Mali.

The state-of-art of the instrument has undergone a sea-change for the better. Dindigal S.P. Natarajan and N.Ramani, disciples of Mali used the Mali technique on the concert dais

with great eclat Sikkil sisters (1930), K.S. Gopalakrishnan (1948) are the contemporaries of note.

B.N.Suresh (1946-1990) was another flutist who made use of the Mali techniques in abundance in his brief successful career. Flute duets of N. Ramani and B.N. Suresh with double mridangam accompaniment of Tanjore Upendran and this writer were great events presented at various places like Madurai, Coimbatore, Ooty, Tanjore etc., fondly remembered by connoisseurs even today.

N. Ramani, the disciple of Mali appeared at the Madras Music Academy in 1956. In addition to Mali's techniques, Ramani has developed and established his own individual style. The major difference between Mali and Ramani has been the "Sruthi" Mali would not accept anything less than "G" (5) and phoo-phooed the lower sruthis. Ramani chose "Dis" (21/2) and successfully developed his own style after the VVV (Venu-Veena-Violin) concerts with Lalgudi Jayaraman and R.Venkataraman.

Ramani sustained himself with his improved techniques of a profuse mix-up of Duritha (speed) phrase in his Kalpana Swaraprastharas. This has projected Ramani in a specific separate exclusive style of his own. His use of a long flute to produce the "Mandhra" and "Anumandhra" shthayees with a cool breeze, similar to the "Bansuri" of the Hindustani variety are his exclusive attainments. His 'Jugalbandis' with Hariprasada Chaurasia brought him reknown at the National level. Ramani's countless number of tours abroad has brought him international acclaim. He founded the Ramani Academy of Flute in 1983 to propagate his art.

Ramani is the fourth flutist to have been honoured with the "Sangeetha Kalanidhi" in the 70th Conference of the Madras Music Academy, which honour he richly deserves. His adherence to traditional values coupled with his innovative improvement in his flautine art have been recognised by the lay and the cognizant alike. *

Editorial

The recent economy drive of the Union Government is not without its debilitating repercussions in the field of music. Its first casualty are the musicians affiliated to the AIR, Mysore. They have been asked to do with the electronic tamboora instead of the dependable traditional one. This because there is no proposal to fill up the post of the lone tamboora artiste who recently retired. Earlier, the other artiste also retired and the post has remained vacant with no hope of replacement. No doubt the same rule is being applied to other categories too. But in them there is no dearth for alternatives. Which is not the case with the tamboora artiste as it determines the very quality of music. It only betrays the callous indifference of the concerned ministry or its utter ignorance of the importance of 'sruti' in music. A Hindustani vocalist in a similar situation would revolt at the prospect of singing with the electronic gadget. But his Carnatic counterpart is seemingly ever willing to compromise even though it is detrimental to his prospects. This indeed is unfortunate.

The electronic gadget is revolutionary in its concept and is certainly not without its usefulness. It comes in very handy in practice sessions, especially for the instrumentalists. But for the vocalist the traditional tamboora is well nigh irreplaceable. Nay it would be suicidal for him to resort to the novelty as it has been seen in many a concert on stage. Indeed it is easier for the singer to get attuned to the drone emanating from the tamboora at the ear level than its counterpart place before him/her. Hence the former's inevitability, besides the aesthetic aura it lends to the very setting.

Even otherwise, it appears as though Karnataka comes last in the priorities of the I & B ministry. When one of its own compatriots assumed the office as the minister for the all-important ministry, the least the Kannadigas all over expected is a status equal to the metropolitan character of Bangalore. But the incumbent seems to be more loyal to his native Kerala than the State which has sent him to the Upper House, the credentials for his present status. As it is, Kerala enjoys a short-wave facility and recently an announcement said it would soon be on FM band. On the contrary, the FM band which was on trial in Bangalore has suddenly become silent. Its trial broadcasts have altogether gone off the air, presumably in the absence of adequate staff.

A short-wave facility for the State is of greater importance, especially after it has come into focus on the national level. That has been the complaint of the Delhi Karnataka Sangha which has submitted a memorandum to both the Prime Minister and the Broadcasting Minister. Inter alia, the memorandum explained that only Kannadigas among all the major linguistic groups in Delhi were deprived of listening to programmes in their language and to know about the happenings in the State first hand. According to the Sangha sources, both of them had promised to expedite the matter. That was soon after the UF government had assumed office at the Centre. All one hopes is that it will materialise during their tenure which itself is a matter for conjecture. And if it doesn't, there is little doubt that the position will be back to square one! Which means a golden opportunity lost!

S.N.Chandrasekhar

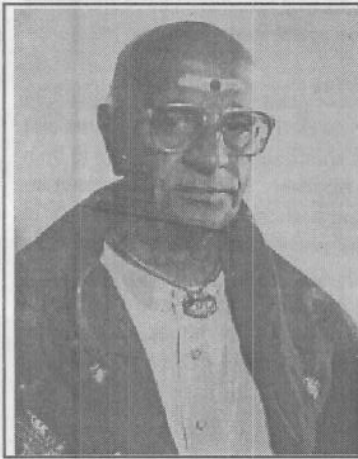


Calling AIR

The feature on Thygiaiah's 'Divya-nama Sankeertana' has already revealed how edifying a chorus could be when the lyric, the raga and bhava coalesce. Indeed, the credit for achieving such harmony should go to M. Balamurali Krishna who has directed the lilting music.

Sources reveal that its duration is 30 half hour sessions. Some even doubted how it could last so long as there are not more than 30-32 kritis under that head. However, on verification one finds the exact number is 88 (vide Kalluri Veerabhadra Sastry's Thyagaraja Keertanalu -- Vissha Vivaranamu -- 1975). That is sufficient to last the intended course. Whatever, there is no doubt that it is a memorable series, one that bears repetition.

Reverting to the routine, a focus on three veena recitals, each of a different generation could be an ideal start for this instalment. **Chitra Lingam** of the younger generation has already made a name for sustained tonality. The Shahana varnam fol-



R.R. Keshavamurthy

lowed by a crisp Mohana-Kalyani piece (Sep 20, 9-15 am) gave her a flying start. Her prelude for Bindumalini (Entamuudu) was pleas-



V. Doreswamy Iyengar

ing for its exalting aural edifice. The kriti itself acquired a lilting flavour, the racy Raja-Raja in Niroshthi lending the recital a delightful finale.

The seasoned **R. Visveswaran** of Mysore featured in the National Programme (Sep 21, 9-30 pm) belongs to the current generation. He opened with a spacious alap for Dhenuka. It was neat and rich in 'gamaks', providing the Thygiaiah kriti Teliyaleru a solid base. The kriti with some alluring 'swara' passages left a lingering impact. But the alap for Kambodi did not rise to such heights.

The well-known **V. Doreswamy Iyengar**, representing the aging generation was the other artiste among the trio. His recital on Gandhi Jayanti day (Oct 2, 9-30 pm) had V.S. Rajagopal (mridangam) and Bangalore K Venkatram (ghatam) for rhythmical support, a reassuring combination indeed. Bhavanuta, the stately Mohana kriti gave the veteran a rollicking start, though the rendition was not free from

slips. His alap for Bhuvanagandhari (Lalitambike) steadied down, but it was evident that his grip on the instrument is lax, the aging taking its toll. His best, no doubt, is far behind him. But Pranatarthihara, the masterpiece of Vasudevacharya in Janjhooti was thoroughly enjoyable, its lilting laya giving it a haunting tilt.

Another veteran who was on the AIR around the same time (Sep 25, 9-30 pm) was **R.R. Keshavamurthy** on the violin. Even as he intonated Vardini (Manasa, Manasa), it was evident that he was in fine fettle. It was disposed of with the usual elan, though not without its harsh overtones. His alap for Deepak (Kalanerchina) was more reposeful, though the kriti bristled with some jarring notes.

Earlier (Sep 21, 10 pm) in the South Zone hook-up a mellifluous voice was heard. It was that of **Mini**, not a familiar name. But her venugana (Kedaragoula), followed by spacious alap for Kalyani (Pankaja Lochana) had lingering effect. It was a surprise packet. But the vocal of **Saraswati Ramachandran** (Sep 25, 9-30 am) was short in its resonance due to an unsteady 'sruti'. Whether it was Kanjadalayatakshi or the main raga Shanmukhapriya (Vadane), the format was in tact. Yet it failed to make an impact due to shortfalls in 'sruti'. Much the same is the case with the flute recital of the senior **K.P. Upadhyaya** (Sep 27, 8-30 am). The tonal fidelity in Navarasakannada



R.A. Ramamani

(Neeepadamu) and Gourimanohari (Guruleka) could never be disputed. That was in the 'Madhya Sthayi'. Once the rendition drifted to the upper octave, it went off the tune marring the impress no end. H.K. Narasimhamurthy's violin support was one of the highspots of the recital.

'Intakante', the Thyagaiah offering in Kannada gave **R.A. Ramamani** a bumptious start. Its steady pace and sonority paved the way for a cozy feeling. Her alap for Mukhari was as enduring, the enchanting Ksheenamai rising the emotional fervour to a trance. A.R. Krishnamurthy's subtle touches on the violin complemented Rama's rendition with as much sensitivity.

For **G. Rajanarain** (Oct 4, 9-15 am) the Kapi piece was totally unimpressive. Even the seasoned S. Seshagiri Rao's solid violin support could not lift it from its low-key imagery. But Shahana (Vandanamu) changed the whole complexion of the concert. The kriti assumed a stately presence, a few gorgeous 'swara' korvais enriching its structural identity.

Suma Sudhindra was in as good a nick as she started her veena recital (Oct 9, 9-30 am) with the even paced Eccharikaga (Yadukula-Kambodi). Her crisp alap for Kapi (Intasoukhya) was equally impressive, despite a few slips in the fingering. But Varali (Mamava Meenakshi) put the concert in a solid mould. The alap itself was well proportioned, the kriti acquiring a delightful presence.

Ratnakanchuka Dharini the Kambodi masterpiece has almost been dumped, having become a forgotten melody. It was the piece selected for her recital by **Jambu Kannan** (Oct 9, 8-30 am). But it belied the expectation, the timbre in her voice having faded beyond recognition. But **G.R. Jaya** (Oct 10, 9-15 am) was in fine fettle as she started with a sharp alap for Thodi. It was a good effort, the lovely



Suma Sudhindra

Rajurvedala enlivened with some lovely 'sancharas'. Shanmukhapriya was equally impressive, sustained in the rare kriti Parvatinayaka. She is certainly capable of rising higher to meet aesthetic elegance. R. Rajalakshmi on violin and R.A. Rajagopalan on mridangam lent Jaya commendable support.

Lalita Nagarajan's Ramanannu (Harikambodi) on the next day at 9-15 showed she has yet to hone her voice fully to add glitter to her style. Her alap for Kalyani (Kamalamba) was in shape though it was the renowned kriti that lent credibility to the melody. S. Seshagiri Rao's violin support was solid.

T. Sharada on her veena has been known for her consistency which was substantiated as she opened (Oct 13, 8-30 am) with Sri Saraswati (Arabhi).



Rajalakshmi Tirunarayan

It had a lovely gait, Bhairavi (Neeepadmulani) emerging as majestically. The impact bristled with an enduring quality. But her senior **N. Chokkamma** who lends her own vocal refrain to her veena left little to write home about (Oct 15, 8-30 am). Neither her Natakuranji (Mamava) nor the Hamsanandi piece that followed could bear testimony to a radiant past. It is a feeble replica. More surprising was the lack of form in **R.S. Nandakumar's** recital (1-30

pm same day). His Bhairavi piece is rarely heard on the concert stage. But neither the alap nor the kriti itself could sustain, as slips kept intruding at will.

Some imaginatively conceived 'taans' lent a dignified charm to **Jayatkumar Das's** Parameswari on the sitar (Oct 17, 8-30 am). It was a cool, calm and sustained effort that made for pleasant listening. Hamsini Nagendra who followed him at 9-15 was in as good a mettle. The Bilahari piece gave her a fine start. But the alap for Dharmavati was a trifle short in its resonance, though the unfailing kriti Durgadevi restored credibility. All the same, a sense of complacency could not be missed.

It is here that Rudrapatnam duo **Thyagarajan and Tara-nathan** cannot be faulted. Their Shuddha-Saveri showed them in a buoyant mood. It was a classic picture of the haunting melody. Kokilapriya (Manayata) kept up the tempo to leave an indelible impact on the listeners. **V. Kalavati** (9-15 the same morning) was in as fine a fettle. Right from the opening Nata (Kanjadalaya) piece her voice touched the peak form. Especially pleasing was the leisurely alap for Kalyani. The lovely kriti Biranavara in Tishra-nadai was invested with some enervating 'swara' kovais. A sure sign of her steady progress.

G.Ramesh (Oct 22, 8-30 am) was as refreshing as he intoned a leisurely Simhendramadhyama. The alap was

reposeful, redolent with some chiselled 'sancharas' associated with it. The kriti Kamakshi was rendered with as much confidence, an array of lovely 'swara' passages embellishing its format. But D.N. Guru Dutt who followed at 9-15 am; could not sustain, his Anandabhairavi classic 'O Jagadamba' lapsing into insignificance because of persistent slips in 'sruti'.

Rajalaskhmi Tirunarayan's veena recital on the following day (8-30 am) lived upto her reputation. Her prelude in Bilahari for the weighty Sri Balasubramanya gave a good idea of the feast that was to follow. Rightly, the rendition of the kriti gave a dignified picture of the soulful melody. Equally engrossing was the Kapi piece, rich in its tonal flourishes.

The popular local duo, **R.K. Padmanaha and D.V. Nagarajan** was in as consistent a form as ever. Drawing their inspiration from a lovely ode to Ganapathi in Amritavahini the duo built a reverberating base in Madhyamavati Ramakatha. And what



G.R. Jaya

a sustained quality of melodic grace it turned out to be! The same rollicking tempo was maintained by R.S. Ramakanth (Oct 23, 9-30 am). His Bhairavi stood out for its classic imagery, the kriti Thanayuni redolent with

nostalgic overtones. A reassuring recital.

Padma Murthy who was not heard for long on the AIR was back on Nov 5. Her piece in Saraswati appeared sedate in essence. But her veena seemingly came alive as she meditatively dwelt on Bhairavi. The alap was not without its misgivings, but the kriti Lalithe brimmed with confidence to emerge as a solid piece. **K.G. Kanakalakshmi** is another artiste who will never disappoint. Her recital (Nov 15, 8-30 am) substantiated the belief. The number Yaro Bandaru is by no means a familiar composition. But her alap for the raga Shanmukhapriya and the facile way the words blended with the melody was proof of her craftsmanship. It was hearty listening, thanks to her cultivated voice. ❖

ESSENCE

SUBSCRIBE TO PHOENIX

Calendar Released



Dr Raja Ramanna, released a calendar on musicians brought out by Ananya, an organisation for the promotion of music and arts, at the Bangalore Gayana Samaja, Bangalore.

Releasing the calendar Dr Ramanna said that calendar art has come longway in our country and lauded the efforts of Raghavendra Rao in bringing out the pictorial calendar.

Portraits of Veena Seshanna, Veena Subbanna, Vasudevachar, Bidaram Krishnappa, Muthiah Bhagavathar and T.Chowdiah have been published in this calendar.

The unique calendar which is priced at Rs.20-00 can be had from Ananya, Malleswaram, Bangalore 560003.

Gwalior Festival

A three day festival of music in memory of the renowned sarod maestro, Ustad Hafeez Ali Khan was inaugurated by Vijayaraje Sindia on Nov 21, 96 at Gwalior.

Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma (Santoor), Hari Prasad Chourasia (flute) V.G.Jog (violin), Rahmat Ali Khan (vocal) and Amjad Ali Khan (sarod) son of Hafiz Ali Khan participated in the festival.

This festival was organised by the Hafiz Ali Khan Memorial Trust.

Thyagaraja Aradhana

Sri Thyagaraja Aradhana Samithi, Srirangapatna is organising the Thyagaraja aradhana from January 28 to 30, 97 at the Sri Kodandarama temple, Bazar Street, Srirangapatna.

8-
N.S. Krishna
Murthy, retired
Director of AIR
Bangalore was
on a visit to
the USA on an
invitation.

US Salutes Purandara

A set pattern has evolved for a mini concert over the years. A varna or a kriti in a madhyama kala to begin with, gradually building up the tempo with more elaborate item reaching a climax with a ragam, tanam and pallavi or a detailed exposition of a major raga, kriti nerval and swara followed by javali, thillana and lighter items like bhajan and devaranamas have been generally accepted on constituting a balanced fare.

The concert must have a variety of raga, tala and items of different vaggeyakaras. However there are special occasions when a concert is wholly devoted to a single composer in order to pay homage and highlight his musical genius.

One such concert was held in New Jersey (USA) in November 1996 as part of Purandara Dasotsava. "We wanted to present Purandara Dasa compositions in a classical mould and not just as post-pallavi items", explained K.K. Ramamurthy one of the organisers who along with his wife Kamala has been playing enthusiastic hosts to many of our senior artistes who visit US on concert tours.

A full length concert of only devaranamas is a risky proposition because we still do not have commonly accepted notations for them. More often than not the ragas and mattu chosen by artistes fail to evoke the sentiment of the devaranama.

But it goes to the credit of Vani Sateesh who was the artiste of the evening for giving a very soothing and satisfying performance for over three hours. Her rich repertoire and manodharma were fully evident

throughout the concert and a full house was treated to a thoroughly enjoyable programme by this young artiste of Mysore settled down in USA after her marriage.

Vani made an auspicious beginning with 'Sripathiyu emage sampada veeyali' in Sri. It was clever handling of swara prasthara, making use of the opening swara phrases of 'endaro mahanu bhavalu' charanas. She then sang 'Ramamanthra japiso' in Kānada before taking up 'Yare Rangana' in Hindola with a detailed raga alapana.

Instead of the customary beginning, she sang the pallavi like GSNDM GSN SMS. The swara singing for 'kariraja varadana' starting from 3 1/2 akshara from sama was skilfully handled.

'Swami mukhya prana' in Ananda Bhairavi, 'yeke nirdaya nadeyo' in Ranjani, 'neene gati' in ragamalika consisting of Patdeep, Des and Dwijawanti were gone through in quick succession before she took up a fairly detailed alapana in Mukhari and rendered 'ēchharadali nade' in mishra chapu. The structure of the composition is such that it hardly permits any sangatis. One felt a detailed alapana for such a composition was disproportionate.

However Vani deserves to be praised for attempting a raga which is rarely heard these days. The main item chosen for the evening was 'ninna nodi dhanya nadenu' in Pantuvarali. The tune is almost identical with Thyagaraja's 'ninna neranammi nanura'. The nerval for 'desha desha thirugi nanu' and swara prasthara lent

a high degree of classicism to the concert.

What followed after the thani avarthanam by Balachander (mridangam) and Murali Balachander (kanjira) were in the lighter genre, 'Ninnantha swami' - ugabhoga and 'neene doddavanu' in Revathi and other popular numbers like 'tarakka bindige' and 'jagadhodharana' were rendered with full of feeling.

Vani was ably accompanied on violin by her husband Sateesh who is basically a computer engineer. He had made use of thicker gauge strings which enabled him to play in the same octave in which the vocalist was singing. Thereby he was not sounding too shrill which is inevitable when accompanying ladies with high pitched voices. One wished that percussionists were more subdued and sober.

The concert was held in the basement of Ramamurthy's spacious bungalow. He has very tastefully treated the hall and has made it acoustically perfect. Listening was a pleasant experience with superb sound system.

Shyamala Bhave

Shyamala G Bhave, has been appointed Chairperson of the Karnataka Sangeetha Nruthya Academy.

The post fell vacant following the resignation Chandrabhaga Devi due to illhealth.



Down Memory Lane

Bangalore K Venkatram

GNB was a crusader of a new wave of "Birka" filled music. A prince among musicians, GNB's concerts drew packed houses. GNB-Chowdiah-Mani trio at the Bangalore Gayana Samaja in Shankariah Hall was always an-eagerly awaited event.

While Rs 4 was charged for the first class for major concerts, a special hike to Rs 6 was levied for this trio and the hall and even the area nearer the fenced pendal would be overflowing. The concerts were of a very high order, pleasing to the innocent and the coqezanti.

The renditions of "Radha Sametha Krishna", "Himagiri Thanaye", "Saras Samadana" were always received with thunderous applause with Palghat Mani in the focus, himself singing as it were on the mridangam.

Elaborate alapana of Kalyani followed by a crisp rendition of "VasudevaEni" invested with nerval at 'Raga Thala Gathulanu Paaduchunu" and a flurry of kalapana swaras are musical presenting ever green in the memory of even the aristocrats connoisseurs.

GNB's 12-minute rendering of Malavi is still haunting me. In those days when small Janaka ragas were not dealt with in such detail, most of the audience were left wondering what the rage could be. When he took up 'Nenarunchinana' there was a hush and lull and they traced the raga finally!

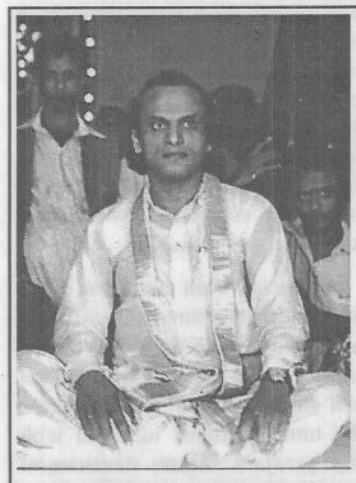
.GNB had a command on musical mathematics. His pallavis, though short could be a testing time for those

flanking him.

Aesthetics were never sacrificed in the presentation. To cite an instance, GNB was seated for a programme with Chowdiah and Mani. The programme was to commence at 4.15 pm. This writer had gone with Chowdiah and the duo had landed in time. So did GNB. Mani Iyer was not there and there was no indication as to why he was delayed and when he was expected.

It was learnt that Mani Iyer had not arrived in town at all. No nearby artiste was readily available. Chowdiah did not want the concert cancelled. (He was worried about the loss of his remuneration!). He sent for a mridangam from the residence of a nearby local vidwan. In consultation with GNB, I was directed to take up the mridangam!

I was totally unnerved and ex-



M.K.Thyagaraja Bhagavathar

plained that I was no match for them. But they convinced me saying that immediately Mani Iyer arrived, I could make way for him and that this could not be done with other artistes.

Finally, I consented and the concert began with right earnest Mani Iyer did not turn up at all. But GNB managed it all so tactfully that nobody could feel the difference. He instilled so much confidence in me that nothing went amiss.

Gradually, during the progress of the concert, I was also gaining confidence that I could manage the situation that day and salvage the issue. Looking satisfied with the confidence built up in me, GNB told me that I could play my solo turn in the pallavi itself. Again I was perplexed and he told me that the pallavi was very simple. He took up Ananda Bhairavi with an elaborate alapana in three stages rendered thanam at length and took up a short pallavi in Adi Tala, single kalai with 1 1/2 eduppu. No pallavi could be more simpler!

The 'spread' of the pallavi was "Parvathi Paramananda Bhairavi".

I was very happy at the simple structure and played with confidence. Later, as the Sahitya Vinyasa continued GNB made the 'spread' quite sophisticated and resorted to the thrikala. He demonstrated that it is not "what" is rendered that is important, but "how" it could be interpreted without sacrificing the Raga 'bhava' or the underlining Sukha-Bhava. He used to revel in singing such very short pallavis in what appeared to be very tough to handle. His rendition of "Gana Lola Karuna-alavaala" in single

kalai Adi and resorting it in thrisra with thrikala exhibited his acute musicianship with equal expertise in raga and laya. Sometime in July 96, a video cassette prepared by N. Pattabhiraman of the Sruti Foundation was presented in a programme entitled, "GNB Sangita Darshana" for the Karnataka Ganakala Parishath and Ananya in Bangalore. It was an exhaustive analysis of GNB's music by a group of musicians and scholars. GNB entered the field when greats like Palghat Rama Bhagavathar, Chembai, Ariyakudi, Maharajapuram, Madurai Mani and Semmangudi were on the scene. How he became one with them is available in that exhaustive, highly informative scholarly study.

GNB was heard in the company of comparatively younger but versatile accompanists like Lalgudi Jayaraman and Palghat Raghu in those days and brought out the essence of classical Carnatic music. His passing away in 1965 created a void not adequately filled even today. He was a very successful teacher. (M.L. Vasanthakumari, Radha Jayalakshmi, T.R. Balu (died very young), Kalyanaraman, V. Ramachandran and a host of disciples) and an able administrator (In charge of the Swati Tirunal Academy and Producer of Music, AIR). He was a charismatic artiste (acted with M.S. Subbulakshmi in Shakuntala). He did create an individual style of his own, the GNB bani, nurtured by many youngsters even to this day.

Two other artistes from the cine world who were not adequately recognised in the arena, but popular in the fifties in the film field and dished out chaste music are M.K. Thyagaraja Bhagavathar and M.M. Dandapani Desigar. My acquaintance with them and association was very short but the concerts I played with them are worth remembering. Thyagaraja Bhagavathar, MKT as he was known was a prolific singer. Very popular in Tamil films and a rage in his days. He had undergone vigorous training under Alathur Venkatesa Iyer (father of Alathur Siva Subramanya Iyer of Alathur Brothers) and possessed a rich



GNB

tonal timbre.

Once for a concert arranged at Denkanikota, Madurai Venugopal (violin), M.L. Veerabhadriah and myself (Ghatam) we travelled in a car. Right through the route, it was frequent stops for garlanding MKT. We used to proceed a few miles and throw away the garlands to clear the car of the load and to be reloaded at the next stop! We reached the concert arena.

The stage was erected at the centre of a huge open air garden. It was with great difficulty that we walked up to the dais. MKT gave me his silver kooja and some volunteers took away our instruments. As we were walking through, there was a stampede to see MKT and I felt the handle of the Silver kooja weightless! The bottom had been screwed and taken away, leaving only the lid in my hands. My shouts to tell MKT was in vain and we finally reached the dais.

As I was explaining the loss of the kooja, some MKT-fan produced it and explained that he had no other way out to meet MKT in person! While 2 or 3 songs were over, there was a huge cry for film songs and they wanted "Manmada Leelaiyam Venraal Undo". MKT commenced the song. In between the song there is a dialogue when the songster says "Swami" before continuing the song. Immediately "Swami" was uttered Veerabhadriah responded saying "What sir?" The vociferous merry response of the crowd was uncontrollable! MKT died

in 1959.

Dandapani Desigar was well known for his devotional Tamil songs. Stalwarts like Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai used to accompany him on violin. Desigar presided over the Tamil Isai Sangam Music Conference and received the "Isai Perarignar" title. He was the recipient of the Sangeet Natak Academi Award, Kalaimamani title and so on. He had a rich, emotional voice and had acted in several Tamil films like Nandanar with Kothamangalam Subbu, Pattinathar Thayumanavar, Manickavachakar etc. In a concert for the Congress exhibition at the Subhash Nagar grounds (now the Bangalore Bus Station) in 1960's Desigar rendered a memorable concert. He passed away in 1973.

The great Tanjore Vaidyanatha Iyer, the mentor of the all time great Palghat Mani Iyer who passed away in 1947, played with Tanjore Lakshminarayana Iyer at the Gayana Samaja sometime in 1946. He created a style of mrudangam play known as the Tanjore school and trained masters like T.K. Murthy.

Bangalore Nagarathammal, who was responsible for building up a shrine for Saint Thyagaraja at Tiruvaiyaru was a great exponent of Carnatic music. She visited Bangalore for a fund raising concert for the Tiruvaiyaru Thyagaraja Shrine. Arcot Ramaswamy Mudaliar, the then Diwan who was the chief guest at her benefit concert at the Town Hall was requested by Nagarathammal for the monetary assistance and the Diwan obliged! *

(To be concluded)

For a ringside
View of Music
World
Read

PHOENIX



Rangashree

DANCING All the Way

Chandrasekhar

The last few weeks of 1996 saw a veritable spurt in dancing activities in the City, as though the young and seasoned dancers were out to reach a target they had set for themselves! The programmes were as crowded as it has been with music in recent times, 'rangapraveshas', a dance feature or two, and an array of 'sadors' filling the bill.

It all started with the annual art festivals, the Sharad Vaibhava of Pratibha Prahlad, Karthik Fine Arts festival of Suma Sudheendra and Ragashree festival of D.Subbaramiah Fine Arts Trust. By and large each presented a mixed fare of music and dance.

Like all these festivals, the Venkatesha Natya Mandira of Radha Sridhar had an ambitious programme. Besides presenting a few seasoned students of the school, it had thrown open the stage to several guest artistes too.

The senior-most among them was undoubtedly Vasundhara Doreswamy of Mysore. An intelligent adoption of Thyagaiah's kriti Ganamurte vouched for her choreographic skill. Some

attractive Sthanakas coupled with meaningful, if wee bit loud, Abhinaya, heightened its popular appeal.

Rangashree was another invited artiste of repute. She was as confident as ever in her interpretation for the celebrated Kambodi varnam



Sumana Nagesh

(Nadanai). The Nritta was emphasised by spacious Adavus, though her Abhinaya tended to be a trifle dramatic.

In its turn, Nupura presented one of its successful experiments. In her choreography for Suladis, its director Lalitha Srinivasan showed the dancerly possibilities of the tested musical form. But instead of a quartet which inevitably cuts into the fluidity, a solo perhaps could have been more purposeful. Though the interpretation was convincing, the staid movement appeared rather monotonous.

Among the Mandira's incumbents, neither the US-based Rupa Shamsundar nor the out-of-form Manasa Prakash could make a mark. The exclusion of Nritta oriented items itself was a pointer to their lack of confidence. Nor did their Abhinaya pieces serve them any better. If Manasa's facials failed to go beyond the superficialities, Rupa seemed to rely more on the descriptive than on Rasabhinaya. Even here the portrayal was on a low key as exemplified in Varnalamo (Manji).

It is here that Sumana Nagesh, another student of Radha Sridhar, presently under the tutelage of M.R. Krishnamurthy, displayed greater depth in both the aspects. The very leisurely pace in the tested Thodi varnam (Rupamu Joochi) accounted for her steady stance, Suma executing the well-knit Adavus with quiet confidence. Her Abhinaya, unfolding the Virahotkhandita, was as impressive, though her 'drishti' could do with some brushing up.

Poornima Ashok

The way Poornima Ashok uses her 'drishti' could be a pointer to others. Her feature for the Ragashree festival was on Krishna, based on a variety of compositions available on the subject. The choreography was simple, the movements were not as dynamic as one associated with Poornima, but the expression of this senior student of Radha was almost compensating for the shortcomings.



Mahita Nagaraj and
Poornima Sagar
Indeed, that carried the day.

Sohanlal Memorial

The annual Sohanlal memorial dance recital for the Malleswaram Sangeeta Sabha featured Vrinda Nanavati, a Kalakshetra product. Petite and prim, Vrinda is known for consistency and with vocalist Srivats also in form, the Alaripu and Jatiswaram (Saveri) gave her a good



Vrinda nanavati

start. Her Nritya as adumbrated in the celebrated Kambodi varnam (Nadanai) raised the fare to its rhythmic heights. Her portrayal of the Virahotkhandita was also precise, her trained 'drishti' carrying conviction. But her 'aharya', especially the facial make-up appeared so colourless that the overall effect got utterly stunted.

Around the same time, Natyashree in association with the Bangalore Lalitkala Parishat presented Srividya Murthy, the US-based steady student of Kamala Narayanan. From the invocatory, it was obvious that Vidya has grown in stature. True, the descriptive in Kamala Jasana (Ragamalika) of Swatiturnal offered little scope for abhinaya. But her Nritya, dotted by liberal Utplavanas and variegated Adavus was absorbing. A glimpse of her maturity in Abhinaya was also evident in her portrayal of the Khandita in the Javali Nee mata sala (Purvikalyani).

Praiseworthy

Though seemingly less involved, the Abhinaya of Poornima Sagar and Mahita Nagaraj, students of Padmini Rao was equally praiseworthy. More so as they were obliged to fulfil an obligation under the shadow of a gruesome accident in which their Guru only on the day before had badly fractured her leg. It was an interesting fare, Poornima's interpretation for the popular Bagilana Theredu and Mahita's portrayal of Parakiya in Evvade O Bhama (Shankarabharana) standing out for their pointed Abhinaya and neat 'angikas'.

Rangapraveshas

The period witnessed two Rangapraveshas, Smitha.K, student of Meenakshisundaram Centre and Mrudul Rajburgi, student of Nupura. Smitha has talent, the only drawback being a bit heavy on her feet. Her Abhinaya also has to gain in depth as could be seen in the day's varnam (Khamas).

Mrudul, however, was more agile, her movements overall testifying to her self-assurance. Mrudul's

Phoenix January 97 - 13



Srividya Murthy

Abhinaya was especially impressive. The facile manner in which she interpreted the Kalahantarita in the Ashtapadi (Madhava Makurau) revealed a clear understanding of the art.

As convincing was Pamadi Yashodhara, another student of Meenakshisundaram Centre, a day earlier. Hers was a compact fare, in which the Thodi varnam (Kopamela) stood out for its coherence between a trite Nritya and an austere Abhinaya. SNC



Poornima Ashok

Tuneful Encounters-11

S.N. Sivaswamy

Music Between Two Rivers

Winter in our country is a season to celebrate. With Christmas and New Year, with music and art festivals, melas, jambories, industrial fairs, trade exhibitions and gala shopping sprees. The temperature in many of the northern cities and tourist places hovers around zero degree centigrade, which is a shade uncomfortable for those of us in the rest of India. Nevertheless winter is the best time to travel, with no rain, clear atmosphere though of course, misty, and plenty of a variety of fruits and other food available everywhere.

I spent three winters in Jullunder in Punjab after it had ceded its position as state capital to Chandigarh. The mercury in winter in that Cantonment City, especially in mid winter, which is the last week of December, stayed under five degree centigrade. They were surely the coldest days of the year.

This was the week Jullunder chose to commemorate a nineteenth century musician of the region, Baba Harvallabh. The Baba was somewhat akin to Baiju Bawra of Akbar's days in that he was a mendicant devoted to music. A samadhi has been built by the people of Do-aba (meaning two rivers, Beas and Sutlej, between which lies an area known for its rich soil fertility and plentifulness of sub-soil water) in the Devi Talab tank bed on the outskirts of Jullunder City.

At this Samadhi many thousands of music lovers of Punjab gather for four days every December on the coldest days to listen to the greatest musi-

cians of the country in day-and-night long sessions during the biting chill of even the early hours.

Before coming to Jullunder, I had thought that Punjab's interest in music was restricted to its rich folk melodies like the songs accompanying the Bhangra and Giddha dances, the great folk operas like Heer-Ranjha, Mirza-Sahiban, Sassi-Punhu etc, besides the soulful shabad keertans of the Ragis. Soon I was to meet great musicians of the land like Sohan Singh (Faiaz Khan's disciple) and Dilip Chander Vedi and to be reminded that Punjab's Patiala was the home of the legendary Bade Gulam Ali Khan's gharana.

The Harvallabh mela is no doubt among the greatest musical events in the country. Every year, music enthusiasts are treated here to the cream of Indian music. Among the concerts I attended were those of Bismilla Khan, Ravi Shankar, Bhimsen Joshi . . . the list is endless.

Bade Gulam Ali Khan, the doyen of Patiala Gharana, was a regular performer at Harvallabh mela. The last time he sang there must have been his last public appearance. I can never forget his arrival on the platform that day. Thanks to my acquaintance with Ashwini Kumar (the former Indian hockey star and noted police officer) who was in charge of the organisation of the mela those days, I was able to secure for myself and my wife place close to the dais. That was the last opportunity I had of being present in

an audience listening to the Thumri Samrat. I also witnessed that day the most poignant scene. Bade Gulam Ali Khan was obviously too ill and could not climb up the steps to the dais. His son Munnawar Ali and a few other disciples had to virtually carry him and seat him in his place on the platform. Until he was properly seated, they had lowered the curtain, sparing the audience the sight of this agonising experience.

We had barely recovered from the shock of seeing the great musician's suffering when the curtain went up and a tumultuous applause rent the shamiana.

From the initial strains of the Swaramandal, through the majestic Calkaus followed by the unforgettable thumri and upto the culmination in the haunting Bhajan, 'Hari Om Tatsat', it was a feast for our ears and we had all forgotten that the maestro was ailing.

Academy Awards

Following are the winners of the Karnataka Sangeetha Nrithya Academy Award for 1996-97:

Carnatic Music: B.Krishnappa (vocal), A. Veerabhadriah (violin), L. Bhimachar (morching), and H.S. Anasuya (special service).

Hindustani Music: M. Lakshman Gowda (vocal), K.S. Hadpada (tabla), Siddaramaswamy Korawar (vocal) and S.B. Hungund (harmonium).

Dance: Pratibha Prahlad, P. Rama (dance singing) Padmini Ravi and Chitra Venugopal (dance teaching).

Light Music: S. Somasundaram (vocal), B.V. Radhakrishna (instrumental) and Sulochana Venkatesh (vocal).

Katha Keerthana: B. Gurusiddappa, and K.S. Narayanacharya.

Kalashastra: Gauri Kuppaswamy and S.C. Sharma.

The award carries a cash prize of Rs 5000, a citation and a memento.

SOULFUL HOMAGE To a MAESTRO

The noteworthy achievement of the Gururao Deshpande Punya Smarane Samithi is the inculcation in music-lovers in the City of getting accustomed to the all-night concerts. Though such Mehfiles are common in the Hindustani music oriented northern districts of the State, back in Bangalore and the erstwhile State of Mysore dominated by its Carnatic counterpart the timings would rarely take one beyond 9:30p.m., spanning utmost four hours.

Came the Jalotas and the Chitra-Jagjit Singh duos, listeners started responding in their numbers to late night faressitting well past mid-night, enlivened by their sonorous ditties.

But Vinayak Torvi of the Samaroh has brought about a transformation in the attitude of the music buffs. As witnessed in the 14th anniversary of the Punya Smarane December 1, the Samaroh has become an accepted routine for avid Hindustani music lovers, so successful and so popular that the venue has moved from a small auditorium in the eighties to a specially erected, sprawling shamiana in the spacious forecourt of the Canara Union.

The fares in these solemn Mehfiles have become doubly attractive, several redoubtable masters in the genre filling the bill. A welcome departure of the annual homage-paying event is a slot for a session of Carnatic music. Such inter-action is nothing new in Carnatic music festivals, prestigious institutions like the Bangalore Gayana Samaja having had Hindusthani stalwarts like Mallikarjun Mansoor and Gangubai Hangal preside over its an-

nual conference.

But in the Hindustani music world, this is a new trend, beginning almost from the time the Samaroh moved over from Dharwad 10 years ago to the City. Now it has become an annual feature. In 1994 M.S. Sheela sang in the Mehfil and in 1995 it was Nagamani Srinath. Now it was M. Nagaraj, the young violin virtuoso who is a much-sought after accompanist, besides being as popular a soloist as in duet with his equally competent younger brother, M. Manjunath.

His solo in the fare came as a breath of fresh air after a rather dismal show in the inaugural concert by the Pune-based vocalist Prakash Ghangrekar. His Bageshri was mediocre, failing to live upto expectation. Notes seemed to stray into the essay at will to distort the very identity of the raga. Nor did his 'Tarana' in Malkus improve matters though the delineation struck to a known contour.

What a contrast it was when the repetitive Vatapi Ganapatim (Hamsadhvani) unfolded itself through the tuneful violin strings of Nagaraj! The alap for Shanmukhapriya in the stillness of the night was more reposeful, a flurry of sonorous 'sangatis' enriching its overtones. It was a solid prelude to a crisp Thanam to be followed by a robust Pallavi in 'chatushra'. The serene quality of the melody and its tonal fidelity should sure have made an impact on the packed audience.

Veteran Gangubai Hangal who had earlier inaugurated the festival, was undoubtedly a star attraction in

the programme. Abhogi gave the doyanne of the Kiran Gharana an imposing start. Her meditative alap sounded as though she was glorying in the notes, the effusion of 'taans' finding as alluring an intonation in the contrasting sonority of her daughter Krishna. Gangubai's Kalavati stood out for its refined exactitude and the Adana piece with which she rounded of her 100-minute rendition, was absorbing, bringing hallowed memories of the great Roshanara Begam.

The young flautist who followed was Praveen Godkhindi, son of Venkatesh Godkhindi, also a flautist who had the distinction of being the only Hindusthani artiste from the State to figure in the annual Radio Sangeet Sammelan-1996. He at once proved his mastery over the technique, the abandon with which he exfoliated the melody winning him unrestrained applause. It was a rewarding experience to watch the youngster wielding the difficult instrument with effortless ease.

The Mohanaveena recital of Vishwa Mohan Bhat as anticipated was the piece de resistance of the festival. His Jog straightaway provided his artistry, the jod-jhala foray casting a magic spell on the listeners who had kept wide awake for the blissful moment. The Maand 'gat' which the master intoned on request, had the same lingering flourish in which Ravindra Yavgal's competent tabala 'sathi' made as indelible an impact.

The concluding session which started almost in the wee hours of the next morning, was reserved for Vinayak Torvi, the worthy disciple of Pandit Deshpande whose memory the former was commemorating in such a fitting style. He had chosen Thodi for the main raga, the soulful melody assuming its dignified aura from the very outset. His airing of Deshkar and Jonpuri was as impressive. And as he rounded of his recital with the customary Bhairavi 'bandish', it was broad daylight, something the avid listeners realised only as they came out into the open! ♦ SNC



T.D. Rajendra and Nirupama in a Kathak Duet

Five young city dancers from Abhinaya Arts Centre, T.D. Rajendra, Nirupama Rajendra, Nandini Mehta, Sathyanarayan Raju and Murali Mohan were on a cultural tour of Switzerland and France performing classical and few folk dances of India.

In a span of 40 days in October - November figured in 16 performances, three workshops at various cities in Switzerland, Paris and France. The co-ordinator was based at Geneva, Sujatha Venkatesh, herself a Bharathanatyam dancer, teacher, senior disciple of Prof U.S. Krishna Rao and Chandrabhaga Devi.

The organisations included many Indian associations, Indo-Swis, French and the Afghan associations who promote South Asian Arts and Culture.

Abhinaya's director, Nirupama says, "It was revealing to see the genuine interest among the Swiss, French and Afghans who drove hours to see the performances and to know more about our rich cultural heritage. Dur-

ing our programmes we could feel them watch with so much love for the arts, be it music or dance which we fail to notice here in India these days. Maybe they are not yet overfed with programmes, at least not many poor quality programmes which is a main reason for the disinterest among people here. Our audience enjoyed the programme and more did we."

One usual remark after every

City Dancers Captivate European Viewers

programme was that they had always seen one person render one style only for the entire evening and found 'our programmes more exciting with variety, good quality and lively young performers'.

At this point it may be pointed out that many a times merit is a casualty while in the choice of artiste for international festivals or sent on cultural tours by the Government and cultural academies. It is unfortunate that many serious young performers who are committed and capable of rendering quality performances are ignored.

Well... all our previous cultural tours abroad were through out guru's initiative or dance companies established abroad. It was a wonderful experience as we were presenting from our own centre. We have had good response for the artistic abilities and been invited again next year for another tour. ■

MURALI MUSIC MUSICAL



SOLE DISTRIBUTORS
OF
CD DHRUVA & SARANG
OF RADEL'S FOR KERALA
& KARNATAKA REGION

Dealers in Quality Musical Instruments
- Expert Repairs & Prompt Service

Shri Kumaran Building, Opp Panagal Park
T. Nagar, Chennai - 600017 Ph: 4345105 Resi: 4991284

12/96

'97, So WHAT'S NEW?

Yet another year bites the dust and ushers in a new one. One would like, of course, to sweep a lot of this dust under the carpet and move on and hence, New Year drinks are gulped down and resolutions are made - hope springing eternal in the human mind. One hopes to find a touch of something new in monotonous routines.

What would a dancer aspire for the New year to bring with it? Loss of a few kgs around the hip, no doubt, and loads of programmes scattered all over the world. I, of course went on a

crash diet between 9 am. and 6 pm on the 1st Jan. and decided it was unhealthy.

Programmes, of course, were welcome. How about one in NCPA Bombay, another in the Tata Auditorium in Bangalore, the Academy Madras, the Rabindra Manch, Hyderabad? But I am sure all we'll get will be one in Bellary, in Kasargod, Hubli or Patna!

Of course, the New Year could always usher in a new costume in the new fangled three colours, stitched to perfection by Aiyylu of course. A

double layered temple jewellery set with HUGE earrings will round off the ensemble beautifully. On second thoughts, the building frown on my mother's brow put all thoughts of new costume and jewellery away from my mind.

How about a new production, I ponder, amply funded probably by the Ministry of Human Resources or better still, a private company. Something about global warming would do just fine, or of course, corruption would be more current. Thank God there are no censors in the dance field. I immediately erased all thoughts of such a production from my mind. I don't want all the local goondas after me!

I quickly started running out of new things to do in the New Year. My mother had a suggestion: how about practice and more practice, hours and hours of work in the class, she quired sternly. Before I could conjure up an excuse she sat down purposefully with the takkal mane and I had to wind up!

Nupura's 18th Anniversary

The renowned Nupura school of Bharathanatyam, under the able guidance of guru Lalitha Srinivasan, recently celebrated its 18th anniversary with a two-day programme on December 7 & 8. The school has, over the years produced a wealth of talent and its students win laurels all over the country and abroad. Its ballets have been acclaimed for taut choreography and sophisticated production.

Lalitha believes that its young students are the hope of tomorrow, and therefore, the first day's programme concentrated on a recital by junior students who conducted themselves creditably. The performance was rounded off with a Nupurite's contemporary dance piece 'DWANDWA' conceived and choreographed by a few young and produced by a team of dancers, musi-

cians and young talent from allied arts, "DWANDWA" dealt with the indecisiveness faced by an artiste who has to choose between his creative urges and the demands of his audience. The three dancers Ajay, Gowri and Sowmya gave a convincing performance. The troupe lead by Sowmya showed promise.

The second day saw two of Nupura's senior students Uma Sudheendra and Suma Krishnamurthy dance. Uma rendered the Atana Varnam with grace, while Suma performed a kriti in Bowli and an Ashtapadi with confidence. The two concluded with a brisk Ragamalika Tillana of Balamurali.

The students of Nupura then performed 'Folk Dances of India, a colourful rendition of dances from

different states. The Kelike, Tamasha, Suggi Kunitha, Garba, Kummi, Holi and Karaga were well received.

Nupura now stands on the threshold of completing two decades in the dance field and its contribution has been immense, be it young dancers, new innovations, ballets thematic or its rich repertoire of Kannada items.

MANU

Dance Workshop in Mumbai

A workshop on Indian classical dance appreciation meant for laypersons and dancers was organised by Mandakini Trivedi at Prithvi Theatre, Juhu, Mumbai on December 1, 8, 15 and 22, '96.

This four-part workshop covered the founding principles of Indian dance, the dance of Shiva, Abhinaya, the vocabulary of Indian dance and the rasa theory.

Geetha Raja

Obituary

Chintalapalli Krishnamurthy



Chintalapalli Krishnamurthy noted vocalist passed away on Dec 29, 1996. He was 76.

Born in Gudibande of Kolar district Krishnamurthy was trained by Chintalapalli Venkata Rao of hallowed memory and the popular vocalist Chintalapalli Ramachandra Rao. With a vibrant voice Krishnamurthy was an exponent of the antique patanthara which he passed on to a host of disciples including his son Subbaganga.

He was felicitated by prestigious organisations like Karnataka Ganakala Parishat, Bangalore Gayana Samaja, Tyagaraja Gana Sabha, Krishna Sangeetha Sabha and had performed in and outside the State.

He was the recipient of the State Academy Award in 1993-94 and titles 'Gayana Chatura', 'Ganasudha Nidhi', 'Kalasindhu', 'Gayaka Bhushana' etc.

M.N.Ratna

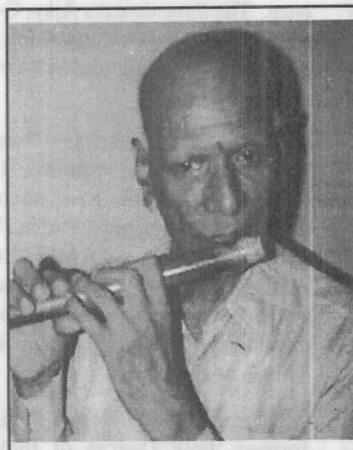
M.N. Ratna who was 68 passed away on December 30, 96 in Bangalore after a brief illness. Born in Hubli. Ratna had her training under Vasudeva Sastry and Bagalur Krishnamurthy.

Ratna used to render light classical varieties, later turned to sugama



sangeetha singing vachanas, bhavageetha in addition to devaranamas. She gave recitals at Bangalore Gayana Samaja, Malleswaram Sangeetha Sabha, Karnataka Ganakala Parishat, Mysore Dasara Festival, Delhi Kannada Sangha and had toured USA and London. She had recorded for gramophone of films and dance and a regular broadcaster.

She was the recipient of the State Academy Award and the Chowdiah Memorial Award. Her daughter M.S. Sheela is a leading vocalist in great demand.



B.Shivaramiah

B.Shivaramiah

B.Shivaramiah, noted flautist and guru of late B.N. Suresh passed away recently. He was 82.

Shivaramiah who had started giving flute concerts when obly 15, was an employee of the State Bank of Mysore and an amateur flutist. He was trained by Palladam Narasinga Rao and later from T.R. Mahalingam for nearly 40 years and had attained considerable command over the wind instrument.

Shivaramiah was a good flute teacher, having imparted his instrumental techniques to several artistes among whom are the well-known flautist B.N.Suresh.

He was felicitated by the Bangalore Gayana Samaja in 1982.

He leaves behind three sons and a daughter.

V.C.Lokiah

V.C.Lokiah, a well known personality in classical dance passed away recently in Bangalore. He was 82.

A recipient of the Karnataka Rajyotsava Award, Karnataka Kala Tilaka, Natya Kalanidhi and Natya Shiromani, Lokiah had toured Canada, China, Australia, Mexico, Romania, Pakistan, Germany, Italy, Sri Lanka and African countries.

Lokiah started his career as a vocalist under the guidance of veteran musicians in Madras and Calcutta and later turned to Bharatanatyam. He was a disciple of Meenakshi Sundaram Pilla of Pandanallur. He was trained in Kuchipudi dance too.

Lokiah popularised the classical dance for over six decades and was one of the senior nattuvanars.

He was the first Bharatanatyam exponent from the State to travel around the world with renowned artistes, Ramgopal, Shanta Rao, Indrani Rehman, Mrinalini Sarabhai, Tara Chowduri and the Krishna Raos.